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# MarinaTimes

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## SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS



One of many Marina buildings left in ruins by the Loma Prieta Earthquake in 1989 PHOTO: EVE FRASER-CORP / FLICKR

## Marina earthquake memorial

by supervisor mark e. farrell

**T**HE LOMA PRIETA EARTHQUAKE that struck San Francisco on October 17, 1989 had a profound and lasting impact, not only on San Francisco as a whole, but in particular, our Marina neighborhood. I still remember driving back to the Marina that evening,

and seeing homes crumbled into the streets, corner apartment buildings collapsed, and the gray smoke that turned into the massive fire at Beach and Divisadero.

Although the devastation was real, we were also very fortunate the damage was not worse. Unlike most days in San Francisco, there were no winds that evening,

and most important, in conjunction with all of our first responders and emergency personnel that spurred into action, our firefighters stepped up to the challenge, and with the aid of the now famous Phoenix fireboat which anchored right off the Marina Green, saved our neighborhood.

MEMORIAL, continued on 6

## REYNOLDS RAP

### Proposed Broadway liquor moratorium

Hypocrisy and politics reign

by susan dyer reynolds

**D**URING A RECENT BREAK IN MY KGO RADIO GIG on the "Cooking with Ryan Scott" show, one of our guests, Chris Wanner, approached me. Wanner is the state manager for Sidney Frank Importing Co., Inc., in northern California and Alaska, representing brands such as Jägermeister and Gekkeikan sake. "Whatever happened to the Pet Food Express that was supposed to open on Lombard Street?" he asked. "Politically connected community groups promoting their agendas over what's best for the neighborhood, that's what happened," I told him. "Well, that's a shame because I live right behind that building and it's a nightmare," Wanner said. "Drugs, screaming drunks, homeless encampments ... why in the world would they want an empty, dark building causing neighbors grief instead of a well-lit business that's good for everyone?"

And therein lies the rub. These community groups are usually well connected at City Hall, making it easier to shove stuff through with little to no input from residents. That's what happened with Pet Food Express in the Marina, and now it's happening in North Beach, where a few incestuous neighborhood organizations are trying to influence what businesses can and cannot open with their proposed Broadway Alcohol Restricted Use District.

In a letter dated February 5, 2014, to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, the San Francisco Planning Commission,

NORTH BEACH, continued on 3

## BELLINGHAM BY THE BAY :: Changing times

### Keep on with the keep-on

by bruce bellingham

**S**AN FRANCISCANS DETEST CHANGE. There's a constant drive for things nostalgic. I suppose I am one of the worst offenders with my nattering on about how San Francisco was a sparkling clean city in the 1970s with plenty of parking spaces and great French restaurants. When it was safe to hitchhike. When people would pay the fare for the car behind them at the toll plaza on the Golden Gate Bridge. When there were street musicians who were as good as any in New Orleans. "I don't know what you mean by 'the good old days,'" **Vernon Alley** once said. "Do you consider a time when blacks were not allowed to cross Van Ness Avenue from the Western Addition the good old days?"

When **Lawrence Ferlinghetti** pushed to have streets renamed for writers, such as **Jack Kerouac**, **Frank Norris** and **Alice B. Toklas**, I shamelessly supported his effort on KQED radio. Obviously, Lawrence succeeded, to the chagrin of old-time San Franciscans, who are more traditional and conservative than people might imagine. The natives were unhappy. Whatever happened to Army Street? Lawrence also

asserted that all cars should be banned from the city, and the streets should be turned into canals like Venice. I like it. Here today, gondola tomorrow. ... A young woman, full of idealism who does charitable works in the Tenderloin, asked me the other day about changes I had witnessed over the past 44 years in San Francisco. The most egregious is how the cost of living has skyrocketed in recent times, forcing the rents up and the locals out. Yet, it amuses me to see broken-down hotels in the downtown area bearing National Register of Historic Places plaques, preserving these hovels for posterity. That's right. A hovel and a hotel are only separated by one letter.

But let's not give up. That's the passionate message from **Norris Song**, owner of the warm and wonderful Japanese restaurant on Polk Street called **Sushi Rock**, who never gives up, since he and his mother barely survived a bus accident in China when Norris was 8 years old. "The bus was hanging over a ravine," recalls Norris. "My mother and I were the last to get off the bus just before it went over the cliff. Later, as a teenager, I found myself in the middle of a gang fight. I felt the bullets whiz past my head. I

BELLINGHAM, continued on 16

## THE HUNGRY PALATE



Deviled eggs with bacon and crispy quinoa at Fog City

### From start to finish, lunch at Fog City is sublime

by susan dyer reynolds

**I** ALWAYS FOUND THE diner ambiance, retro neon sign and Embarcadero locale of Fog City Diner charming. At one time the food was also a draw, but I hadn't been

in years, as the menu had grown sadly forgettable. That has changed under the experienced eye of Bruce Hill, one of the pioneering chefs of modern-casual California cuisine. Hill cut his teeth at celebrated eateries like Stars and Aqua; in

2002, he became executive chef and co-owner of Bix, where he garnered critical acclaim and really made a name for himself. Hill also received rave reviews for Picco and Pizzeria Picco in Larkspur and Zero Zero **FOG CITY, continued on 12**



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## TOP TEN STEAKS IN AMERICA

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- Bobo's** — 1450 Lombard, San Francisco, CA
- Peter Luger Steakhouse** — 178 Broadway, Brooklyn, NY
- Bern's Steakhouse** — 1208 South Howard Avenue, Tampa, FL
- CUT** — 9500 Wilshire Boulevard, Beverly Hills, CA
- Emeril's Delmonico** — 3355 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Las Vegas, NV
- Mario Batali's Carnevino** — 3325 S. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, NV
- Chicago Cut** — 300 North LaSalle, Chicago, IL
- The Precinct** — 311 Delta Avenue, Cincinnati, OH
- Elway's Cherry Creek** — 2500 East First Avenue, Denver, CO



PHOTOS: MISHA BRUK

# Osso Steakhouse

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### Upfront

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### Calendar

#### March events

Let Simon Schama take you through centuries of Jewish culture; enjoy Lavay Smith and Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers at the S.F. Jazz Center. Also this month, catch Judy Collins, the Irish-American Festival, a Fellini film series, the St. Patrick's Day parade, the Women's Film Festival, CAAMFest, and tour Alfred Hitchcock's San Francisco — if you dare. **20**

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The former Lusty Lady strip club will become a bar from the Tosca group PHOTO: FRANK JANG

**REYNOLDS RAP**  
CONTINUED from page 1

and the San Francisco Small Business Commission, Telegraph Hill Dwellers (THD) President Vedica Puri says her group is writing to join the North Beach Business Association, the Broadway Community Benefit District, and Southern Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association to express support “for the proposed ordinance sponsored by Supervisor Chiu to establish a temporary Alcohol Restricted Use District in the Broadway Neighborhood Commercial District.” Puri says the groups want a two-year “time out” on new Type 48 and 21 liquor licenses along the Broadway corridor, allowing only Type 47 licenses for “bona fide eating places,” which the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control defines as a place where gross sales of food exceeds gross sales of alcohol.

She points to the “drunk, disorderly and aggressive behavior” in what was once a “vibrant and diverse entertainment district.”

Who are they kidding? We’re talking about the original Barbary Coast and, since the 1960s, an area that has been known for strip clubs. In fact, there are nine strip clubs in the two blocks between Montgomery and Columbus on Broadway and Kearny — four serve liquor; all attract gang activity, prostitution, drugs, and guns along with the usual “bridge and tunnel” bachelor parties.

Puri also says that residents avoid the area during evenings and new businesses that would “enhance and revitalize” the corridor are “understandably averse to locating there.” She blames all of this on bars and lounges, but never once mentions the strip clubs. I found that curious, until I discovered that Joe Carouba, co-owner of BSC Management — the company that owns all but one strip club in San Francisco — is the vice president of the Broadway Community Benefit District, to which he has pledged a hefty \$200,000. The president of that group, Stephanie Greenburg, is also president of the Southern Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Association and a close con-

fidant and advisor to Board of Supervisors President David Chiu, who is sponsoring the liquor moratorium legislation.

All of this is creating problems for Jordan Angle, whose 88-year-old grandmother, Alyce Craft, owns a building at 493 Broadway, where he would like to open a high-end lounge and restaurant. “I have a great business partner and we’re willing to invest \$2.5 million in renovations,” Angle told me. “Our GM worked at Bix and The Matrix Fillmore. I want to cater to locals and to people who work in the Financial District; the people who stop in at places like the Comstock Saloon on their way home — I want to bring them to the area, which will help with revitalization.”

Angle’s lounge will serve a full menu, but he fears the restrictive nature of the 47 License could be the difference between success and failure for his large space.

“We think food is a reason to get people to come to the area and stay, but we also need to be able to host corporate events to make enough money to survive,” he said. He also pointed out that “bona fide eating places” don’t have a great track record in the area. “What family wants to bring their kids to dine in the middle of nine strip clubs? Enrico’s filed for bankruptcy three or four times; the guys from Naked Lunch are great restaurateurs, but they opened Txoko there and it closed, too. Impala failed. Andrew Jaeger’s House of Seafood, who went into the Condor and offered free live jazz seven nights a week, failed. The list goes on and on.”

Perhaps the most frustrating part for Angle has been the politics. “I have 200 letters of support and they have 37 protests, 34 of them on a form letter produced by Stephanie Greenburg. My attorney and I met with David Chiu to see if he could help us, and he said ‘If Stephanie says yes, I’ll say yes.’ So I sat down with Stephanie and David Chiu’s legislative aide Catherine Rauschuber and told them what he said. Stephanie said if Nancy Shanahan said yes, she would say

yes. And, of course, Nancy said absolutely not.”

Shanahan is the wife of former Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin, and residents and businesses in North Beach have complained for years about the couple’s influence over THD’s decision making. “Peskin told me that if I got a meeting together with all the players he would act as mediator,” Angle said, “but I’ve emailed him multiple times and he hasn’t responded.”

Angle is also upset that the very same groups that want the moratorium eagerly supported a Type 48 license for Future Bars to open another Bourbon & Branch in the old Jazz at Pearl’s space on Columbus Avenue, which had a 47 license. It’s right next door to the new rendition of Tosca Café, which they also welcomed with open arms, and a few steps from four more bars. “They’re also in full support of Ken Friedman and April Bloomfield from Tosca opening another bar with a 48 license in the old Lusty Lady strip club,” Angle said, “which just so happens to be owned by Roger Forbes, co-owner of BSC Management with Joe Carouba.”

It’s no surprise that one of the other big players in the Broadway Corridor drama is Kathleen Dooley — another confidant and advisor to Chiu who is a member of the Small Business Commission, served two terms on the Board of Directors of THD, is the past president of the North Beach Merchants Association, and the current president of the North Beach Business Association. “I got a letter of support from the North Beach Business Association until Dooley became president, and then I got rejected. I don’t understand how someone who is the president of a business association and a small business commissioner is opposed to business,” Angle said. Dooley was instrumental in keeping Pet Food Express off of Lombard Street, and so we come full circle in the twisted world of neighborhood groups and City Hall.

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THE BACK STORY ∴ They were colorful times

# A Broadway kaleidoscope: The golden age of North Beach street life

by Ernest Beyl

**T**HE NINETEEN SIXTIES — if your personal history allows you to remember back that far — gave us the golden age of Broadway, that southern boundary of North Beach. At least that's how I remember those times through my fog-covered glasses.

I have lived in San Francisco since I was an infant, brought here from Fresno by my parents. Yes, Fresno. I called the "City" my home until a wild job search sent me to Southern California for an interlude — an interlude that worked, until it didn't. I returned to San Francisco in 1965 during those golden years of Broadway I'm talking about. A friend helped me find a Telegraph Hill apartment, a short walk from the excitement and pleasures of Broadway as it was then. I still live on Telegraph Hill. And now, as then, it's only a short stroll to the present Broadway. Though I don't really partake in the "excitement and pleasures" of the street anymore because those two concepts don't apply these days. There are two reasons: I am getting older, and I become irritable and tiresome. That leads me to the second reason: Broadway is getting old and has become irritable and tiresome, too. You can say that I'm ready for a Broadway renaissance. I feel it coming.

When I think back to Broadway's golden years (and I'm defining Broadway as that two block stretch from Montgomery, west to Columbus) much has changed. At the same time, I suppose little has changed. Back then Broadway was kaleidoscopic. Bright visions were tumbling by at high speed. That was exciting. I suppose kaleidoscopic is a descriptive word for Broadway even today, but the excitement is gone.

Two *San Francisco Chronicle* comrades introduced me to

Broadway — music critic and social commentator Ralph J. Gleason and photographer Peter Breinig.

## OPENING MY EARS

I was a jazz fan and Gleason knew jazz. He took me to the jazz clubs, all within that two-block Broadway stretch — The Jazz Workshop, El Matador, Basin Street West, Sugar Hill. The Jazz Workshop offered a graduate course in what jazz was all about. In those times, it was all about Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie and Stan Getz. There were nights when it was possible to hear Dizzy Gillespie at the Jazz Workshop, walk across the street to Sugar Hill and hear bluesman Lightnin' Sam Hopkins, then drift up to Basin Street West and enjoy the Count Basie Orchestra. I remember Carmen McRae singing "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" at Sugar Hill and Dizzy walked across the street from the Jazz Workshop, sneaked up behind Carmen and began playing an obbligato on his trumpet. Magnificent! Another evening, Charles Mingus at the Jazz Workshop snapped a bull-whip over the heads of his audience because it had been unruly by chatting during one of his stand-up bass solos. While there may be some live music now on Broadway, we're talking midgets here as opposed to the giants of yesteryear.

## THE HANGOUTS

For me, hanging out on Broadway began and ended with Enrico's at 504 Broadway. Enrico Banducci opened it in 1958. Peter Breinig presented me to Banducci. It was like introducing me to the pope. "Bandooch," as we called him, knew everyone and handed out blessings. These blessings came in the form of being welcomed at the "family table" and to eat Enrico's pasta, and to listen to him play his violin. And occasionally to be introduced to visiting out-of-

towners like his hungry i headliners Woody Allen, Lenny Bruce, or Mort Sahl. The hungry i (and, by the way, it was all lower-case) was the most influential show-room in American cabaret history — a story for another time. Enrico's was often the scene for gatherings of Hollywood royalty — Frank Sinatra, Peter Lawford, Paul Newman, and his wife, Joanne Woodward. It was at Enrico's one night that Bandooch serenaded Duke Ellington with a screeching violin version of "Don't Get Around Much Anymore." Duke kissed Bandooch on both cheeks and said "I love you madly."

## THE TOPLESS CLUBS

Before the California Gold Rush began in 1849 women were few and far between in the sleepy Mexican village of Yerba Buena. But once word got out of gold at Sutter's Mill, things changed. Miners flocked here as did a few adventurous women merchants, and teachers, for example. So did dancers and waitresses — and bare breasts were commonplace.

In June 1964, bare breasts became institutionalized. Carol Doda launched the topless craze that swept San Francisco — and the nation. Big Davey Rosenberg, publicist for the Condor (560 Broadway at Columbus), asked Carol Doda, a Condor waitress, to dance in a topless swimsuit. She did and San Francisco has never been the same since.

Soon a North Beach Club called El Cid, now the New Sun Hong Kong Restaurant (606 Broadway at Columbus), was headquarters for the second topless dancer in North Beach. She was Gayle Spiegelman, billed as the Topless Mother of Eight. She really did have eight kids. (What did movie sex kitten Jayne Mansfield and Gayle Spiegelman have in common besides the urge to display their chests for fun and



Seedy, exciting — who's to judge? PHOTO: THOMAS HAWK / FLICKR

profit? Both were decapitated in horrific auto accidents.)

A few weeks later, along came Yvonne D'Angier, billed as The Persian Kitten at the Off-Broadway (1014 Kearny). She was an Iranian citizen and was later threatened with deportation. Flamboyant attorney Melvin Belli intervened. Some say he married her to give her U.S. citizenship, but I can find no record of that.

I also recall a topless shoeshine stand. There were also topless bands, a pool hall with topless pool players, and a topless ice cream joint. In 1967, some clubs began featuring bottomless entertainers. I'm hesitant to add that things went down from there.

The sexual revolution was in full swing then. Comic Lenny Bruce and others were challenging legal criteria for obscenity. What a great city I thought. I still think so.

## THE RESTAURANTS

The restaurants on Broadway then were grand, lusty Italian joints with verve and style and food that sent you away with a warm glow of contentment.

New Joe's (540 Broadway) was established in 1928. It was the first of our restaurants that believed in dining as theater and put the hot pans, flames licking their sides, on view from the sought-after counter seats. New Joe's gave us Joe's Special (hamburger, eggs, spinach and onion).

And Enrico's wasn't just a coffee house and bar. It served robust Italian food. Banducci himself was frequently in the kitchen preparing ravioli from his grand-

mother's recipe. The secret ingredient was calves brains.

Then the incomparable Vanessi's opened in 1936 and occupied the prime corner spot, 498 Kearny at Broadway. My greatest memory of Vanessi's is strolling down Telegraph Hill with Paul Desmond, Dave Brubeck's alto saxophone player, and striding into Vanessi's for cold, straight-up martinis, followed by a rare steak.

Swiss Louie's (493 Broadway) opened in 1936 as well. It was dimly lit and as smooth as an Italian silk shirt unbuttoned to the waist. The waiter deftly finished your culotte steak in a copper pan right at your table. He warmed it with sweet butter and Worcestershire Sauce.

All are gone, but a reincarnation now exists of that wondrous North Beach Italian style. It is Original Joe's (601 Union), a class act keeping the tradition alive.

## THE AMBIENCE

Yes, in the good old days there was a palpable, almost nonchalant ambience on Broadway. We were all hipsters then — or worked at it by reading Beat literature and by not urinating in doorways. Nowadays would-be hipsters are mostly crude outliers and they frequently use neighborhood doorways for a binge purge.

In the old days, I remember the characters that "ran" Broadway — those who made it tick — were louche and loopy, XXXL personalities. Today, it seems this new breed of Broadway characters is undersized and mostly lewd and larcenous.

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NEWS BRIEFS ∴ Crissy Field new direction, near-knockout in San Francisco, Larkin's Lombard troubles

### CRISSY FIELD FALLS FALLOW

If you've been following the story of a future mid-Crissy Field development at the Presidio, you know that from 18 proposals, the Presidio Trust narrowed the finalists to three: the George Lucas Cultural Arts Museum; the Conservancy, and Bridge. You also may know that after receiving the plans in December, the Trust returned them to the finalists and requested a second round of submissions which, in the Trust's view, adhered more closely to the Presidio's standards. A public meeting drawing more than 500 interested community members was held in January, with 96 audience members taking the microphone to express opinions and preferences.

Finally D-Day — Decision Day — arrived. In a hastily-called February news conference, Nancy Bechtle, president of the Trust's Board of Directors, announced that the Trust's choice was: no one.

No one? In a project that had been in the planning stages since 2011, the

Trust had decided to postpone all development activity for the area. According to the Trust, "The Presidio Trust Board of Directors has unanimously decided not to pursue any of the proposals to build a cultural institution in the historical Presidio along Crissy Field."

The finalists were as surprised as the community. Representatives of all three wrote formal, pleasant responses expressing the honor of being asked and their continued support of the Presidio. However, in at least one carefully worded statement, David Perry of the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum indicated that there had been no indication of the outcome.

"The reasons the Trust rejected our proposal — or the other two — are known, specifically, only to the Trust board and staff," Perry said. At this point, none of the three teams has publicly announced future intentions.

"All three proposals are excellent expressions of generosity and vision

for this iconic location," said Bechtle. "After much deliberation, however, we have determined that none are right for this landmark site at this time. We thank all three finalists, their supporters, the public, our neighbors, and the citizens of San Francisco for their input." Stay tuned.

— Marilyn Damon Diamond

### KNOCKOUT ATTACK?

A local artist contacted the *Marina Times* to report that she had been the victim of an apparent knockout attack in San Francisco earlier this year. While walking to work on Brannan Street, she was hit in the head from behind; she said she was able to catch her fall and see the assailant run away. According to the police report, she continued to her destination because "I had to go to work and did not feel that bad," and she was able to seek her own medical attention for the pain to the back of her head.

### HOUSING PROBLEMS START HERE

Larkin Street Youth Services says "the best way to end homelessness in San Francisco in the next 10 years is by bringing youth to the forefront and supporting solutions that address major roots of the crisis." That is the whole point of the Larkin organization, but it is a particularly pointed comment in light of the group's still-unfulfilled ambitions to turn the old Edward II Inn on Lombard Street into housing for young adults vulnerable to becoming homeless. The CEQA Working Group issued a case study reporting that local NIMBY opposition has resulted in two years of delay, missed project funding deadlines, and about \$200,000 in additional costs being added to the project.

In November 2013, the San Francisco Planning Department issued a letter of determination concerning the determination of income eligibility for residents in the development. So planning continues, but the project is still on the slow track.





# AMBIANCE



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POLICE BLOTTER : From the Officers of Northern Station

# Crime on the beat

The crimes below are a small snapshot of what the officers of Northern Station are doing. For a more comprehensive list, visit [www.sf-police.org](http://www.sf-police.org); under Compstat, there is a link to CrimeMAPS.

**UNWANTED HOUSE GUEST**

Thursday, Jan. 2, 9 a.m.  
2800 Block of Filbert Street

A man returned from a week's vacation to find that his home had been ransacked. The place had a cigarette odor, numerous items were boxed up and placed by the front door, ready to be removed, and his car keys for two vehicles were missing. He went down to the garage, where he saw the building's supervisor with a woman. She said her dog had been lost and the supervisor was helping her find it.

She asked to speak in private with the victim, and she told him she is homeless and stayed in his apartment the previous night. She said she was there with a homeless male she had just met, and that it was the male who had removed items from the apartment.

When officers responded to a call, they also spoke with the subject, who told them the same story she'd told the victim, who noticed that she had several of his stolen items on her person. She was arrested for burglary, unlawful entry, and stolen vehicle charges and booked at county jail.

**OFFICERS KNOW WHAT YOU DID IN THE DARK**

Saturday, Jan. 4, 3:52 p.m.  
Sacramento Street at Polk

Police officers were called for a woman attempting to set fire to piles of newspaper. She was walking northbound on Polk Street, lighting multiple fires. The caller who had alerted police was following the woman, watching the situation unfold. The subject would light a fire and the SFFD would extinguish the fire — whether it be in garbage cans, Christmas trees and trash.

When the police arrived, the subject said she wasn't doing anything wrong, she was just burning compost. A computer check revealed numerous warrants for her arrest. She was booked at county jail on charges of arson and for the warrants.

**BAG MAN**

Sunday, Jan. 5, 4 p.m.  
Van Ness Avenue at Eddy

A caller summoned officers to a store, where a male subject had come into the store with a large bag, in which he placed clothing items as he walked around the store. The subject tried to leave through a garage door, but finding that locked, he went to the front door. He was detained by store employees.

The bag contained numerous stolen items, but he told the police officers that it was all a mistake; he said he had forgotten to remove the items from the bag before he left. He was booked at Northern Station for burglary, unlawful entry, and warrant charges.

**BATHROOM REFEREE**

Sunday, Jan. 5, 1:50 a.m.  
1125 Fillmore Street

Two women in their late forties came to Northern Station's front counter after being dropped off together. One woman said she was using the bathroom at a bar when the other woman barged into the unlocked room without knocking. They began to argue.

The argument turned physical, with one woman grabbing the other's hair and dragging

her to the ground; the second woman bit the first woman's leg and they both punched each other numerous times in the face.

The Northern Station front desk officer summoned medical help for both of the women (one of whom had a contusion from the leg bite and the other had her front teeth knocked out).

Both were booked at county jail on charges of aggravated assault with force, and officers sought video footage from the bar.

**SECURE LOCK BOX**

Tuesday, Jan. 7, 11 p.m.  
1100 Gough Street

A caller told police that there were two male subjects in an apartment building lobby trying to steal packages. Officers set up a perimeter around the building before entering. In the lobby, they saw the two subjects using a drill to try to get into the fire lock box — presumably there were keys to other locations in the building.

When the subjects saw the officers, they ran, but they were captured after officers chased them through the workout room and pool area. They were arrested and booked at Northern Station on charges of burglary, unlawful entry, conspiracy, possession of burglary tools, possession of prohibited weapon and narcotics and stolen property, and resisting arrest.

**MEMORIAL**

CONTINUED from page 1

While the earthquake was undoubtedly tragic, it also served to bring our community together, especially down in the Marina. For a number of years after the earthquake, on each anniversary, neighborhood leaders and merchants on Chestnut collaborated to host a neighborhood remembrance celebration under the Dome at the Palace of Fine Arts. It was attended by thousands, and incredibly important to the neighborhood's healing process.

Though born out of tragedy, these celebrations brought our neighborhood together. In San Francisco, today it often feels we focus on issues that divide us instead of focusing on those that bring us together, and I believe that civic tone needs to change, especially in our neighborhoods.

It's why I love collaborating to organize neighborhood events such as the Marina Family Festival, and why I'm excited to announce my intention to work with the neighborhood to turn the Marina Earthquake Memorial into a reality down on the Marina Green.

**THE MARINA GREEN**

The Marina Green is an incredibly important part of our Marina neighborhood, and San Francisco as a whole. Growing up in the Marina, I remem-

ber running laps around the Marina Green in the evenings with my father (back when there was still a dirt track), and now on the weekends I take my children there for soccer games. It serves as host to a number of civic events, most recently playing a key role in the America's Cup festivities, and is one of the most beautiful local parks in the world for our neighborhood residents.

During my first year in office, I was approached by our Recreation and Parks Department, which sought to activate the old Degaussing Station, which sits on the north side of the Marina Green parking lot. Ever since running those laps as a kid, the Degaussing Station, which was previously used by the United States Navy, has been boarded up and remained unused and underutilized for years.

In April 2011, the Recreation and Park Commission approved the release of a Request for



The Degaussing Station could become a new site for the Marina Earthquake Memorial PHOTO: EARL ADKINS

## The debate about putting a restaurant on the Marina Green, in my opinion, was a focus on the wrong question.

Proposal (RFP) for the use of the building. An independent selection panel selected the Woodhouse Fish Company, which submitted a proposal to restore the abandoned space and turn it into a neighborhood restaurant. In November 2011, the Recreation and Park

Commission unanimously approved their selection.

After a lengthy and substantive community conversation about the selection, it became clear that too many Marina residents were not fully supportive of the idea. While many people knew about the proposal, most I spoke with were unaware. As these concerns were brought to my attention, I put the brakes on moving the restaurant proposal

forward inside City Hall.

Whenever we deal with our city's precious open space, I believe neighborhood input and involvement is crucial to any plan that the city is looking to propose. Input and involvement is not only crucial, but in my view mandatory, because deci-

sions about our open spaces have lasting impacts for our neighborhoods and the entire City. Unfortunately, the dialogue shifted from brainstorming ideas to better utilize the Degaussing Station space, to a debate about putting a restaurant on the Marina Green. In my opinion, it was a focus on the wrong question.

**THE MEMORIAL**

For years, many of the same neighbors that organized the remembrance celebrations after the 1989 earthquake have been working with our City's Fire Department and various city agencies to place a memorial on the Marina Green dedicated to the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake. The purpose of the memorial is to remember those who lost their lives, honor those firefighters and other first responders who fought to save the Marina neigh-

borhood, and educate the public about the importance of disaster preparedness. There could not be a more appropriate location for the memorial than Marina Green Promenade, especially given its proximity to where the Phoenix Fireboat was anchored right off the Marina Green.

In January, funds were approved from our city's Arts Commission to turn the Marina Earthquake Memorial into a reality. During March, my office will be putting together a steering committee to help lead and see the project through from start to finish. In April, we plan to host a broad and open community meeting with the entire neighborhood for the artists to present the memorial concepts and receive feedback. Everyone is invited to attend. When the community is satisfied with the ultimate concept, and after working through any other issues, we plan to go through final design and budget approval this sum-

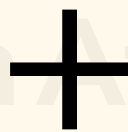
mer. My hope is to break ground on the Marina Earthquake Memorial this October 17th — on the 25th anniversary of the 1989 earthquake.

The neighborhood process to evaluate what would replace the dilapidated Degaussing Station has been contentious, but I believe that we have now found the best project and use for this site. The Marina Earthquake Memorial will be an urban monument to one of the most memorable events in our city's history that brought our community closer together. The memorial is rooted in our neighborhood history, which reminds us of the past, has meaning for the future, and is something that can bring us all together.

With your help, I look forward to making it a reality.

Supervisor Mark E. Farrell is the District 2 supervisor and can be reached at 415-554-7752 or [mark.farrell@sfgov.org](mailto:mark.farrell@sfgov.org)

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## NORTHSIDER :: New faces, returning favorites



Clockwise: Locals get a Surfset high-energy group workout at the new Sweat Republic; Guitarist-singer Patrick Main entertains the crowd during Peet's neighborhood party; Original chef Christophe Hill returned in February to help A16 celebrate its ten-year anniversary in style; Peet's party also featured live streaming onsite from KFOG

PHOTOS BY: GILT CITY INC. / ABBY WILCOX; GREG RICE; SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS; GREG RICE

# Business is booming

by john zipperer

### FOR PEET'S SAKE

There were numerous people reading the *Marina Times* when one of our editors showed up at the grand opening last month. As proud of that as we are, we know that that wasn't the main attraction of the festivities. Instead, the folks who turned out for the new Peet's Coffee & Tea neighborhood party (2080 Chestnut) at the beginning of February got to taste the new bean brews, get some freebies, and enjoy local musicians and a live KFOG broadcast.

Folks will return for the coffee and the *Marina Times*, naturally, but Peet's isn't resting on its laurels. Later in February, the company announced that it was rolling out a new line of fresh food items developed with Bay Area chef Arnold Eric Wong (Raison D'être bakery). These include applewood-smoked ham sandwiches, super greens and kale salads, lentil salads, and more, which I'll leave for you to discover yourself, because if I describe any more of them here, we'll have to move this column to our Food & Wine section.

### SWEAT IT OUT

Gabby Pavelko got in touch with the Northsider to tell us about some March events at her local business. Pavelko is the owner of Sweat Republic, a group fitness studio that opened earlier this year on Greenwich and Fillmore. She says Sweat Republic is "centered around the philosophy of community, offering high-energy group Surfset, TRX, and yoga sessions in a music- and heart-pumping environment, with beat-responsive lighting to set the mood."

If reading that's got your heart pumping, you might want to check out the new "candlelight restorative yoga class" on Friday, March 7, 7-8:30 p.m.

And you can help out Sweat Republic's fitness manager, Jason Root, who is one of the Mr. Marina contestants. As we reported last issue, the Mr. Marina competition requires contestants to fundraise for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. So on Friday, March 14, 5-9 p.m., you can show

up for Root's Mr. Marina Silent Auction. Tickets are just \$10, and all of the proceeds will go directly to LLS. Sacramento band Private Criminals will provide the music, and the ticket price includes a free glass of wine or champagne. You can burn off the bubbly calories at the next Surfset workout.

### SWEET 10 FOR A16

It is hard enough to keep a restaurant going through its first year, so ones that last even longer deserve our hearty congratulations. It's been a decade since A16 opened in the Marina (2355 Chestnut Street). Named after an Italian highway, A16 features food and flavors from southern Italy (especially Campania). When the *Marina Times* showed up for the 10th anniversary party in mid-February, we were pleased to see award-winning chef Christophe Hill return for the night. Hill (see photo above) cooked a special dinner of A16 classics for the revelers.

Now, let's go for 10 more years.

### JUICE IT UP

Project Juice opened its newest location in mid-February at 2259 Polk Street. If you know what "cold-pressed" and "raw" mean in regard to food, then this is the juice place for you. If you don't know what they mean, this is the place to find out. Add in "organic" and "community-focused," and you get a pretty good idea about this all-things-juice place.

### OVERHEARD AT BURGER KING

Mother to young son: OK, go ahead and give your order.

Son: I'm tired.

Mother: OK, let's go. (*turns to leave*)

Son (wide-eyed): But I want Burger King!

Mother: We're leaving. You're tired.

Son (wider-eyed): But I WANT BURGER KING!

Mother: No, you said you're tired. We're going home. I'm not doing this.

Got any tips for the Northsider? E-mail: john@marinatimes.com



# North Beach saloon culture

by ernest beyl

**T**HIS IS A COLUMN about saloons — where they are, who frequents them, and why. The philosophical question that occupies us here is this: Are the saloons that we have come to know and love a dying institution? We fervently hope not. In fact, we see a resurgence of the saloon culture — a magnificent throwback to the days when great debates took place in saloons. Bets were made, won or lost. And the free lunch abounded.

San Francisco has always been a thirsty town. A saloon culture existed here right from the town's boozy beginnings. Nowhere moreso than in convivial North Beach. In fact, it is this favored neighborhood enclave where many of the city's finest saloons are located — and we don't mean cocktail lounges. Cocktail lounges are to saloons as tanning salons are to a sunny day at the beach with a six pack.

There may be those who believe saloons are on the wane. Those folks (not necessarily teetotalers) point to the fact that people just don't drink as much alcohol as they once did. Certainly, health concerns are paramount. Nevertheless, the saloon culture is not totally dependent on alcohol. Even former drinkers still hang out in saloons. And I maintain that most of us don't go to saloons to drink. We go there to talk. We go there for the social intercourse.

## SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

Ah, the social intercourse. I am reminded of a comment succinctly expressed by baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Leroy Robert "Satchel" Paige: "Go very light on the vices, such as carrying on in society — the social ramble ain't restful." Thanks for the warning Satchel. I'll keep it in mind.

On the other side, Satchel's equal in the silver tongue department, Samuel Johnson, that Englishman of considerable social moxie, said, "There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn." Today we would call Dr. Johnson a saloonist of the first rank.

W.C. Fields (himself an expert on the subject) said, "If I had my life to live over, I'd live it over a saloon."

## THE SALOON EXPERIENCE

But how do those of us who frequent saloons



All it takes is a room, a bar, some booze and a pool table  
PHOTO: MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY / FLICKR

define them? I offer the following axioms on the saloon experience:

A good saloon provides shelter from an encroaching world — a world we would frequently just as soon shut out.

A good saloon is a second home. Sometimes personal dwellings are small, perhaps only a bed and a bath. Saloons are extensions of small studios and apartments. They are places to stretch out a bit.

A good saloon might on occasion loan you money (cab fare maybe), take your messages, or tell callers you are not there (even if you are) and sometimes serve as your post box.

A good saloon bartender not only knows your name but also knows your beverage of choice. And engages you in conversation — trivial or existential. It's your choice.

A good saloon is like a good private club. It cossets its members and provides them with camaraderie and a sense of well-being. Actually, a good saloon is better than a private club — no dress code, and no stuffiness masquerading as good fellowship.

Those five axioms state why saloons are not a dying breed but will always be here to nurture us.

And now here are a few North Beach saloons — valiantly waving the flag — and open for serious researchers.

## THE SALOON

The oldest continuously operating saloon in San Francisco, The Saloon (1232 Grant Avenue) opened in 1861 as part of the Fresno Hotel. The story goes that the hotel and the saloon were saved in the 1906 earthquake and fire by a water brigade that refused to put the hotel's resident hookers out of business.

## TOSCA CAFE

Recently reconstituted, Tosca (242 Columbus Avenue) opened elsewhere in 1919. The bar still serves those killer cappuccinos made with chocolate, steamed milk and brandy, and the juke box is still loaded with Puccini and

Verdi. But now food has been added and good food at that. Craft cocktails are available here as they are in many North Beach saloons, but they are superfluous to many of us who prefer the simpler pleasures.

## ORIGINAL JOE'S

Besides being a restaurant of the first rank, Original Joe's (601 Union Street), has one of the handsomest bars in the neighborhood. Libations are well made and the bartenders are true professionals — talkative if encouraged, or silent, but efficient. The bar at Original Joe's is the kind of place that can rub off the rough edges of a bad day and provide an amicable collision of old and new friends.

## SPECS' 12 ADLER PLACE

Specs' 12 Adler Place (the actual address is 12 Saroyan Place at Columbus) was a speakeasy during Prohibition. Gregarious Specs Simmons took it over in the 1960s. Hanging above the bar can be found the genitalia of a walrus. It's that kind of place. Not a genteel environment but an impudent one.

## LA ROCCA'S CORNER

La Rocca's (957 Columbus Avenue) dates back to the 1930s. Joe DiMaggio dropped in occasionally. Back in the 1940s, we are told, a gangland hit took place in the basement. That was then. These days there's a sign over the bar reading: Drink with Dignity.

Yes, there are other saloons in North Beach. You may want to try all of them.

As I wrote earlier, I see a strong resurgence in the saloon culture of North Beach and my saloon compatriots agree. Our democratic rallying cry is Vox Saloonibus Populi — "Saloons are for the People." Or maybe it's "The People are for Saloons." My Latin is a little shaky, but that's the kind of thing we saloonists like to debate.

For a saloonist's debate feel free to contact [ernest@marinatimes.com](mailto:ernest@marinatimes.com).

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If you're not in the mood for breakfast, the full menu is offered as well with a selection of cheeses and salumi with kettle bread to a full-blown feast of whole roasted Dungeness crab and prime rib. The menu is accessible. It's simple food, well-sourced, abundant and comforting yet sumptuous.

You can craft your dining experience by begin-

ning with oysters or sizzling iron-skillet roasted mussels, shrimp and crab and move to specialties such as a crab enchilada, fresh fish or prime rib. Sweets have their own category with freshly made beignets, Tortuga Caribbean rum cake and salted caramel vanilla crunch cake.

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Salito's is fresh, bright and full of casual ambience. Large, multi-leveled decks overlook the water and the beauty of the area is absolutely breathtaking.

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## FOOD & WINE

IN THE SPIRIT ∴ Fog City



Left: Lead barman Dustin Sullivan; Above: Bad Moon Rising Cocktail  
PHOTOS: HEIMO SCHMIDT; GARRICK RAMIREZ

# Barman Dustin Sullivan

by garrick ramirez

I LOVE A GOOD COCKTAIL. Waxed mustaches, overwrought ingredients and subsequent Portlandia parodies have done nothing to dissuade me from the city's current cocktail craze. The boozy alchemy of taking a set of ingredients, coaxing new flavors from them, and creating something greater than the sum of its parts is fascinating ... and delicious. When I go out, I'll sit at the bar chatting up the bartender and taking notes. It's a great way to learn new tricks and meet interesting folks like Dustin Sullivan.

### FUN AT THE BAR

Sullivan is the lead barman at the newly rechristened Fog City. He's an incredibly likeable guy with a noble credo guiding his work. "The primary role of a bar is to be fun," he told me. "Anything that gets in the way of that only compromises its essential purpose." I mouthed a silent *amen* as he said it.

He noted that his outlook was shaped by a visit to Restaurant Gary Danko. While he found the table service highly efficient but stiff, all the fun was at the bar. There, the Michelin-starred food was served with smiles, fist bumps and joviality. He's taken the convivial inspiration to heart. Last time I sat at Dustin's bar, I overheard two patrons inquiring about his outfit. It resulted in him happily sharing with them the measurements of his jeans.

### CREATIVE COCKTAILS

Dustin applies his populist philosophy to the cocktail list he's created. He balances crowd-pleasers with more complex drinks. His **Milk Punch** (bourbon, brandy, rum, citrus, spices, lemon, sugar, and clarified milk) has proved an instant hit. The light and delectable drink is infused with

Christmas spices and citrus zest. A cocktail glass hardly seems big enough.

Things get more interesting with the **Bad Moon Rising** (recipe below), a drink inspired by Dustin's love of earthy Italian wines such as Barolo. "I wanted to capture the jammy, rich, smoky qualities of the wine," he said. The cocktail includes a curious ingredient called saba. (I was fairly sure it wasn't the mackerel I know from sushi menus, but you never know these days.) It's actually a molasses made from grape must, the stuff left over from wine making. Inspiration comes in many places, and working alongside high-end kitchens certainly doesn't hurt. One night at Picco (Larkspur), where Dustin previously worked with Fog City's chef Bruce Hill, he noticed the chefs using saba to top ice cream. He asked for a taste and immediately decided the complex sweetener would find a home in his cocktail creations.

### UNIQUE TECHNIQUES

What's his favorite spirit to play with? Mezcal, the smoky cousin of tequila. He likes how it captures the vegetal qualities of tequila and the smokiness of scotch. You'll find the latter spirits in his **Risky Business** (blanco tequila, Aperol, Dolin blanc vermouth, Bank Note scotch, and Angostura bitters) a clean, incredibly balanced take on a Negroni. The drink comes out quick thanks to it being served on tap (premade in batches and stored in a standard soda keg). It's a welcome trend.

For the **Saboteur** cocktail (Old Bardstown 4-year-old bourbon, Carpano Antica vermouth, Campari), Dustin utilizes another trend du jour, barrel-aging. I grilled him: Does it really do anything other than look good on a menu? Plenty, it turns out. When vermouth is combined in a barrel

with high-proof spirits, over time it starts to mimic Madeira or port. The cocktail becomes richer, bitterness is rounded out, and the barrel imbues oak and vanilla notes.

### NEW AND NOTABLE

Bar managers have the dubious honor of being solicited constantly by liquor distributors. I asked Dustin if he's been introduced to anything of note lately and he quickly reached for a bottle of Spirit Works sloe gin, a craft spirit produced in Sebastopol. The reddish liquor is made by infusing gin with sloe berries, an astringent fruit you wouldn't want to eat on its own. "It's deep and rich while still being bright, the sweetness leveled by gentle bitter and tart notes. It's got balance and complexity," he explained.

So where's a guy like Dustin go when he wants to sit on the other side of the bar? "The Marina Lounge is my home away from home. Sully, the owner, is like the awesome uncle that you can't wait to see," he says with a smile. And his order? A beer and a shot, naturally.

### BAD MOON RISING

(Serves 1)

1 ounce Oro De Oaxaca mezcal (or other smoky mezcal)  
¾ ounce Spirit Works sloe gin  
¼ ounce Breckenridge Sipping Bitters (you can sub Benedictine)  
¼ ounce saba  
¼ ounce lime juice  
5 mint leaves

In a mixing glass, muddle the mint with the sloe gin. Add the other ingredients and shake vigorously. Double strain over a large chunk of ice. Garnish with a mint sprig.

Enjoy!

Garrick Ramirez can be reached on Twitter at @WeekendDelSol or at garrick@weekenddelSol.com.



# Classic San Francisco spaces get new projects

by marcia gagliardi

A NAME HAS BEEN REVEALED FOR Traci Des Jardins's new restaurant in conjunction with the Presidio Trust that's due to open this spring: **The Commissary** (101 Montgomery Street), paying homage to the Presidio's military history. The menu will be Spanish-inspired Californian with local seafood and ingredients from the farmers and ranchers of nearby Marin and Sonoma counties. The restaurant is opening on the first floor of a former barracks that dates back to 1895, and how convenient — it will be in the former barracks mess hall. Look for a simple and pared-down design with salvaged Douglas fir tabletops, an open kitchen, a bar serving coffee in the day and cocktails at night, a private dining room, and a retail wine and grab-and-go area.

## NORTH BEACH

Did you know that the Sons & Daughters duo (Teague Moriarty and Matt McNamara) is taking over the former Bottle Cap/Washington Square Bar & Grill location? Well, now some details have emerged about their plans, as well as the name: **The Square** (1707 Powell Street, 415-525-3579). They want the new restaurant to be neighborhood oriented and lively, much like when it was home to the Washbag back in the 1970s. To keep the scene communal and fun, the classic American menu will offer a variety of items, including bar snacks and large plates to share. Some possible menu items include pickles with bresaola, baby back ribs, chicken-fried quail, and a burger. Yup, it'll be much more straightforward than Sons & Daughters, but still using quality ingredients.

As for what's happening at the bar, they're developing a full list of cocktails, most of them takes on classic drinks (think twists on the 7 and 7 and French 75). Amy Racine, the beverage director at Sons & Daughters, is developing the wine selection, working on a 65-bottle list from California and Europe. As for beer, they want to offer a wide range, from low end to higher, with both domestic and imported choices. Right now, the aim is to open March 1. The 3,000-square-foot space will offer seating for 90, and one-third of the restaurant will be saved for walk-ins each night. They also have some great late-night hours: Wednesday through Sunday 5 p.m. to 1 a.m.

## NOB HILL

Another classic space is getting a new tenant: It was just about a year ago that news of the closure of the grand and venerable Masa's broke. The space has been empty ever since, but now we have word that Sachin Chopra of San Mateo's All Spice and his wife, Shoshana Wolff, have taken it over. The new endeavor's name is

**Game** (648 Bush Street), with chef Zack Freitas (currently chef de cuisine of All Spice) in the kitchen. As the name might suggest, the menu will include game meats like pheasant and bison, with internationally influenced flavors and preparations. The menu will change seasonally, and include a limited-quantity daily burger made with game meat.

The concept is definitely more casual than Masa's, but it won't be completely informal either. There will be a choice of ordering à la carte or from the tasting menu, and the space is being redesigned to be more open, with an expanded bar area, adding some counter seating, and knocking out a wall to reveal a window in the front of the space. The dining room will seat 60, with an additional 12 seats in a private dining room. Masa's impressive wine collection was included with the space, and they've also got a full liquor license. Wolff, who is a sommelier and winemaker, will craft the cocktail list and wine selection. The timeline currently has them opening in late spring or early summer, depending on license transfers and inspections.

## FINANCIAL DISTRICT

A few chef updates: Taking over the vacancy left by executive chef Patrick Kelly at **Gitane** (6 Claude Lane, 415-788-6686) is Alicia Jenish (previously at Grand Cafe), who was originally brought on a couple of months ago as the corporate chef for Franck LeClerc's restaurant group/Claude Lane (she will continue to mentor other chefs at his restaurants). Her new menu is taking a more rustic approach. She plans to bring "Gitane back to its gypsy roots," taking inspiration from the cuisines of southern Spain, northern Africa, and southern France. Some highlights include pumpkin salad with Manchego, cress, and marjoram vinaigrette; local fish tagine; and a goat mixed grill with a cumin-scented chop, yogurt-marinated leg, crépinette, farro verde, pomegranate, and marinated feta. One thing to note is that Jenish will integrate a whole animal program with Boer goat from The Long Ranch, lamb from McCormack Ranch, and whole pigs from Llano Seco Rancho Organic Farms. There is also a new Spanish happy hour on the patio (Monday through Saturday 5 p.m. until closing), which will include three complimentary snacks available from the kitchen or outdoor bar cart, with the order of a cocktail, wine, beer, or house-made sangria.

*Marcia Gagliardi is the founder of the weekly Tablehopper e-column; subscribe and get more food news and gossip at [www.tablehopper.com](http://www.tablehopper.com). Follow her on Twitter: @tablehopper. E-mail: [marcia@marinatimes.com](mailto:marcia@marinatimes.com)*

## Jenish will integrate a whole-animal program at Gitane with goat, lamb, and pigs.

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big boy—two plus pounds of whole roasted Dungeness crab!

But there is more than just crab on the menu for those who may desire an alternative—there is artisanal salumi and burrata, a shredded short rib sandwich and filet mignon, among many other possibilities.

Things are quieter now that fall is finally here so parking is easier and more plentiful. You can grab a banquette and look out the twenty foot windows at the beautiful bay, watch the boats come and go and gaze at the beauty of the city that we

all treasure.

## Grab a banquette and look out the twenty foot windows at the beautiful bay.

The chilly weather is perfect for the Franciscan's other seafood options like

garlic-steamed clams and hearty seafood Cioppino, perfect for a cold day by the bay. And if you can find room, try a decadent dessert made with their house made frozen custard ice cream.

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Left to right: Hot Brown sandwich; Fresh-to-order crullers

### FOG CITY

CONTINUED from page 1

in San Francisco, but it is his newest venture, where he partnered with Bill Higgins (who opened the original Fog City Diner) that brings more than a decade of stellar cooking full circle. It is, quite simply, Bruce Hill at his best.

Hill and Higgins dropped the "Diner" from the name, cleared out the kitschy '80s interior and replaced the old signage with slim sans-serif letters lit in cool blue neon, but the biggest change is the menu, and the makeover is a huge hit — on a recent weekday during lunch, the place was packed (even renowned director and father of the *Star Wars* franchise, George Lucas, was in the house).

#### STARTERS

The lunch menu is just the way I like it: short and sweet, but so enticing that I want one of everything. The deviled eggs are a great way to start — four plump whites piped with tangy, creamy filling, topped with smoky bacon and sprinkled with crisped quinoa and micro snips of chive (\$7). Grilled kale salad, while it may not sound exciting, is a trifecta of beauty, flavor and texture: wilted, slightly bitter Tuscan kale, subtle notes of chervil (French parsley), sweet Fuyu persimmon, a dash of heat from watermelon radish, the richness and crunch of Duchilly hazelnuts, and a velvety, piquant goat cheese dressing (\$12).

I'm a huge fan of barbecued eel — it's smoky and sweet, and the flesh is white, flaky and delicate — but it's rarely used outside of Japanese restaurants. Hill makes it the star of his take on a Caesar, paired with endive, a lemon-anchovy vinaigrette, shaved celery and Parmesan cheese, and Fiordolio olive oil, which Hill favors on all of his menus. Buttery, peppery and fruit forward, Fiordolio evens out the bitterness of the endive and the puckering tone often present in lemony dressings while still allowing the sweetness of the eel to shine. A hint of umami from the anchovy ties it all together (\$13).

#### SANDWICHES

You can't go wrong with any of the sandwiches, but make your selection based on how hungry you are (and whether you can take a nap afterward). If you want something light, go with the smoked salmon smørrebrød (Danish open faced sandwich), sourdough rye seed bread topped with generous chunks of smoked salmon, smoked egg salad, California-grown Will's avocado, and fresh herbs (\$16).

The Saigon dip, a riff on the Vietnamese bánh mì, is a soft French roll piled high with thinly sliced roasted pork, pickled vegetables, cilantro, and chili aioli, cleverly served with phở broth for dipping.

Hill's menu makes good use of the gargantuan, blazing hot wood-fired oven, which encompasses half the kitchen and roasts their much talked about whole chicken in under half an hour. While the chicken is only available on the dinner menu (which we will review at a later date), there are still plenty of uses for the oven at lunch. If you want something substantial, don't miss the wood oven Hot Brown, a straightforward version of the classic Kentucky sandwich that is all kinds of wrong but unapologetically, decadently delicious. Served open-faced on sourdough, it features roasted heritage turkey, Pt. Reyes cheddar Mornay sauce, bacon, and Roma tomatoes licked

by the flames until the bread is crisp and the sauce is brown and bubbly (\$18).

If there is one signature that has followed Hill throughout his career, it's the

**The Saigon dip, a riff on the Vietnamese bánh mì, is served with phở broth for dipping.**

burger — aficionados and critics have crowned the version at Bix as the best burger in the city for years. You'll find another signature burger at Fog City, an upscale fast food style version with a thin patty, shredded lettuce, tomato and tomato aioli, onion, bread and butter pickles, and house-made American cheese on a house-baked bun served with a side of house-cut fries (\$17).

#### ENTRÉES

Entrées range from vegetarian-friendly grilled trumpet mushrooms over Anson Mills grits with a blistered cherry tomato vinaigrette (\$15) to farmers' market chicken noodle soup in a roasted broth with hand-rolled noodles, market vegetables and hatch chilies (\$16). While I'm not a huge fan of swordfish, which most often I find dry and tasteless, the Fog City wood-grilled local swordfish made me rethink that; the juicy, tender fish is paired with plump, earthy shell beans and roasted cherry tomatoes in a marjoram-hatch chili broth with garlicky aioli for a little kick (\$25).

#### DESSERTS

For dessert there are two must tries — both house made, both \$6: the frozen custard made with Straus Family Creamery and vanilla bean (add the egg yolk caramel sauce) and the famous "fresh-to-order" French crullers (donuts made with choux pastry for a light, airy

FOG CITY, continued on 13



NEW AND NOTABLE :: Good food fast

# Slip into Saiwalks for a sampling of authentic Vietnamese street food

by julie mitchell

ONE THING THAT most people who have traveled to Vietnam have in common is an enthusiastic appreciation for the country's street food. Long before the food-truck craze hit the United States, enterprising chefs had set up shop along the sidewalks of some of Vietnam's busiest cities, grilling, steaming or boiling tasty delicacies to be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike.

Now Marina residents don't have to go that far to get a taste

of authentic Vietnamese sidewalk food. They need only venture to Steiner Street where Saiwalks (a combination of the words "Saigon" and "sidewalks") opened last December. This small space with its simple seating and kitchen view serves up a variety of Vietnamese food for lunch, dinner or to go.

The simple yet versatile menu begins with fresh spring rolls and crispy imperial rolls (\$7.95), all house made, and moves to bánh mì, the ever-popular sandwich served in a French baguette with your choice of all-natural chicken, pork, or black angus

steak, and cucumbers, tomatoes, carrots, cilantro, and jalapeno (\$8.95). A vegetarian option features tofu, mushrooms and asparagus sautéed in lemongrass and sesame oil. Saiwalks also offers two meal-sized salads with chicken, steak or tofu (\$11.95), but it's the



Saiwalks on Steiner Street offers casual indoor and outdoor dining PHOTO: LEXI LEE

street food specialties that take center stage.

Phở is the ultimate comfort food: slow-cooked broth served with rice noodles, cilantro, basil, onions, and your choice of two chicken versions, beef or the vegetarian option with apples, carrots, Napa cabbage, tofu, broccoli, and bok choy. The bún (vermicelli bowls) are a lighter, cooler option than phở. Saiwalks makes its own bánh xèo (crispy crepes) from rice flour and coconut milk, creating a French-Asian fusion dish that's deliciously spiced with both shrimp and pork, or chicken, grass-fed beef, or

tofu. All are \$11.95.

The côm dia (rice plates) feature jasmine rice topped with a sweet and spicy dressing and either nine-spiced chicken, grilled lemongrass pork chop, beef, or a vegetarian choice (\$13.95). Specialties made from family recipes are shaken beef tenderloin or grilled, marinated shrimp, both with rice; a grilled salmon vermicelli bowl; or a "bouillabaisse" made with unusual ingredients, including tamarind and pineapple (\$16.95).

Kids' meals include beef or chicken phở, and a

barbequed chicken sandwich or rice plate (\$6.95). Saiwalks offers a modest selection of wine by the glass, beer and specialty nonalcoholic drinks. Try the hot Vietnamese slow-drip coffee with condensed milk on a chilly day or the iced version when it's balmy.

And don't forget: If you get a craving and are too busy to stop in and dine, you can order a Saiwalks meal to go or get it delivered as well.

**Saiwalks:** 3348 Steiner Street, 415-549-7932, [www.saiwalks.com](http://www.saiwalks.com), daily 11 a.m.-9 p.m.

E-mail: [julie@marinatimes.com](mailto:julie@marinatimes.com)

## FOG CITY

CONTINUED from page 12

texture), one glazed with sweet orange and the other with intense dark chocolate. Trust me, it's worth saving some room just for these.

Fog City also has a selection of wines by the glass, draft and bottled beers, and artisanal cocktails — I loved the Fog City milk punch, made with clarified milk, bourbon, brandy and rum, infused with citrus and spices. Invented in the 17th century, milk punch became popular with southern riverboat gamblers and other gadabouts during the 1800s. The whey is removed, leaving the milk transparent. It still tastes like milk and feels silky on your tongue, so it provides an extra smooth vehicle for infusions (for more on Fog City's cocktails, see In the Spirit, page 10).

**FOG CITY:** ♦♦ ½

1300 Battery Street, 415-982-2000, [www.fogcitysf.com](http://www.fogcitysf.com); Sunday-Thursday 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Friday-Saturday 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m.; kitchen closed Monday-Friday 2:30-4:30 p.m.

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LA VITA DELIZIOSO :: Go-to chicken dishes

# One-pot braised chicken recipes for quick weeknight dinners

by susan dyer reynolds

PEOPLE OFTEN ASK FOR MY FAVORITE chicken recipes, but truth be told, I didn't eat a lot of chicken growing up, mostly seafood, pasta and vegetables, which is what my mom was partial to. I do make her succulent whole roasted chicken with root vegetables often in the winter (I sometimes substitute game hens), and in the summer, I like to prepare my grandfather's pollo al mattone (chicken under a brick) on the grill. My "second mom," Kickie, taught me her recipe for Kentucky pan-fried chicken, which she's been making since she was a little girl — it's the most delicious fried chicken I've ever eaten and well worth the learning curve (pan frying chicken is harder than it sounds. You can find the recipe for Kickie Fried Chicken at [www.marinatimes.com](http://www.marinatimes.com) or [www.northsidesf.com/1202/pan-fried-chicken.php](http://www.northsidesf.com/1202/pan-fried-chicken.php)).

The other thing people ask for is "easy weeknight meals," and many of those requests include chicken as the main ingredient. I do have two go-to one-pot braised chicken recipes that I love. I've been making the Jacques Pepin recipe for many years; sometimes I do an earthy, savory version using sautéed wild mushrooms, sage and rosemary in place of the lemon, orange and ginger. For the recipe from Marja Vongerichten (wife of renowned chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten), you'll need a few traditional Korean ingredients available at any Korean market (try First Korean, 4625 Geary Street near Park Presidio) or online (I get them at [www.hmart.com](http://www.hmart.com)).

**Tips and tricks:** As always, use responsibly raised chicken (I like Mary's, available at better markets like Whole Foods). Yes, it costs a bit more, but it's worth it, not only because the chicken is more humanely raised but also because it's safer — salmonella outbreaks at factory operations like Foster Farms and Tyson are becoming increasingly more common. The new FDA recommendation is not to rinse chicken because it sprays bacteria all over the sink, countertops and you. Just pat it dry. Always make sure the juices run clear and a meat thermometer reads 165 degrees in the thickest part of the meat (not near the bone).

## JACQUES PEPIN'S SPICY GINGER AND LEMON CHICKEN

(Serves 2-4)

- ¼ teaspoon chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- Dash of salt
- Dash of dried thyme leaves
- Dash of cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon flour
- 2 chicken quarters, skin removed (you can also use just thighs or drumsticks)
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 strips lemon zest
- 2 strips orange zest
- 2 teaspoons fresh ginger, minced
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- ½ cup sweet apple cider
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted

Mix together the chili powder, cumin, salt, thyme, cayenne pepper, and flour in a bowl. Coat the chicken legs in this mixture.

Heat the olive oil into a large sauté pan set over medium heat. Add the chicken and cook until well browned on both sides, about 10 minutes total.



Marja's easy braised chicken

Add the lemon zest, orange zest, ginger, garlic, and apple cider. Scrape the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon to dislodge any browned bits, and bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover skillet, and cook for 15 minutes.

Sprinkle with sesame seeds and serve with the pan sauce (suggested sides: mashed potatoes or rice and salad with lemon vinaigrette dressing or green vegetables).

## MARJA'S EASY BRAISED CHICKEN

(Serves 4)

### Umma Paste

- 4 large garlic cloves, peeled
- 3 tablespoons gochugaru (red pepper powder)
- 3 tablespoons fish sauce
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons gochujang (red pepper paste)
- 3 tablespoons soju

### Chicken

- One 4-pound chicken or 10 chicken pieces of your choice
- Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- Umma paste
- 1 tablespoon soju, sake, vodka, or water
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted
- 8 small boiling potatoes, peeled
- 2 medium yellow onions, coarsely chopped
- 2 carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 bunches scallions, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 fresh green chile pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 fresh red chile pepper; thinly sliced
- Cooked white rice, for serving (optional)

**Umma Paste:** Combine all ingredients in a blender and puree to a smooth paste.

**Chicken:** Whisk together ½ cup water, the umma paste, soju, honey, and sesame seeds. Set aside.

Cut the chicken into 10 pieces (2 wings, 2 drumsticks, 2 thighs, halve the breasts; alternatively, ask a butcher to do this for you). Season chicken pieces aggressively all over with salt and pepper.

Heat the oil in a large, wide heavy pot over high heat. Working in batches if necessary, add the chicken, skin side down, and brown on both sides, 6 to 7 minutes per side.

When all the chicken is browned, add potatoes, onions, carrots, scallions, and reserved umma paste sauce to the pot and stir everything together. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is cooked through (165 degrees) and the potatoes are tender, 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Sprinkle with chilies and serve with rice (optional).

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## APPETITES AND AFTERTHOUGHTS

# San Francisco 'classics'

by ernest beyl

**A**WHILE BACK, I WROTE a column about what I believed to be the best San Francisco restaurants past and present. I called them "classics." What a great exercise in frustration that was. I got a lot of mail. Some readers agreed with me. Others wanted to tear me apart limb by limb. OK, those were my choices. So, with

career, he played for the Yankees, the Red Sox, the Giants, the Phillies, and the Dodgers. He had a lifetime batting average of .349. Not bad! When he retired, he decided to open a restaurant and bar. It opened in 1957 at 333 Geary Street, right off Union Square. It's still there, and like my buddy Joe Sykes, I eat there whenever I'm in the neighborhood.

Huge, hand-carved sandwiches — pastrami, corned

### MOLINARI'S DELICATESSEN

OK, I hear you. Molinari's is not a restaurant. Who cares? It's a wonderful alternate lunch spot in North Beach. Do you know about Molinari's sandwiches? If you don't you're gastronomically deprived. Molinari's (373 Columbus Avenue) in North Beach dates back to 1896. It's a high-profile deli with literally thousands of Italian specialty items — sausage, cured meats, fresh pastas, cheeses, salads, and imported canned goods. Its take-out sandwiches are the stuff of legend

— literally. Joe DiMaggio included instructions in his will that Molinari's cater his memorial service at Saints Peter and Paul church in nearby Washington Square. "Joe used to come in a lot. He loved our salami," says Molinari's capo Joe Mastrelli, third generation Italian-American.

### COSTCO

Yes, Costco! I go to the one at 450 10th Street. After you've piled those Costco big push carts with whatever you're shopping for, get in line for a Costco hot dog, my choice for a true gourmet hot dog experience. I'm not being frivolous here. Just let me tell you about those dogs: one foot long, pure beef hot dogs in a steamed, fresh bun. By the way, the hot dog, plus just about as much sweet soda stuff as I can handle, costs \$1.50 plus tax. Take that steaming dog over to the condiment counter. Squirt some yellow mustard along its length. Add some ketchup. And some gaudy

## You won't find "plating" at Lefty O'Doul's. Your lunch sits on your plate ready to eat, not to view.

trepidation, here are a few more of my San Francisco classics. These places are all presently operating — some for many years. If you don't like them, sound off. My editors appreciate it when they can respond to hungry readers.

### LEFTY O'DOUL'S

Long ago, I had a friend named Joe Sykes. He was in the Army and was a secretary for five-star Gen. Douglas MacArthur in Japan after World War II. Joe took dictation and did all the correspondence for old "Dugout Doug" as he was irreverently called. When Joe was finally discharged, he worked for Cathay Pacific Airways. His office was in downtown San Francisco at Powell and Geary Streets, right in the center of everything. Now Joe was a very smart guy, and he ate lunch almost every day at Lefty O'Doul's, just up the street on Geary. Finally, Joe retired, lived in the East Bay and fell into that curse of the aging, dementia. As a result, he kept wandering away from his home in Moraga and frequently tried hitchhiking back to San Francisco. One day he made it and wound up at Lefty O'Doul's for lunch. That's where they found him — having pastrami on rye and a draft beer. Didn't I say Joe was a smart guy? And that brings me to Lefty O'Doul's, and if you don't know who Lefty O'Doul was, you're either new to San Francisco or have never heard of baseball.

Frank "Lefty" O'Doul was a native San Franciscan. He was born in 1897 and died in 1969. In his lifetime, he was the manager of the San Francisco Seals and a teammate of such famous baseball figures as Joe DiMaggio, Babe Ruth and Ty Cobb. During his

beef, roast beef, ham, and turkey — also, a fine meatloaf and great chili. Roast prime rib and barbecued spare ribs on weekends. No, you won't find that new culinary science of "plating" at Lefty O'Doul's. No edible engineering. Your lunch sits on your plate ready to dig in — not to photograph and tweet.

### SAM'S GRILL

Recently I met a group of friends for dinner at Sam's Grill (374 Bush Street). I hadn't been there for a long time. The joint still looks old-school, assertively shoddy. The ancient and tuxedoed waiters may stand around peering at the TV screen for the game of the week, whatever it may be, but they leap geriatrically into action when needed. And the night I was there, we needed them, and they performed beautifully. Yes, you can still go there with your inamorata and dine in a curtained booth, and no one will know it — until tomorrow morning when

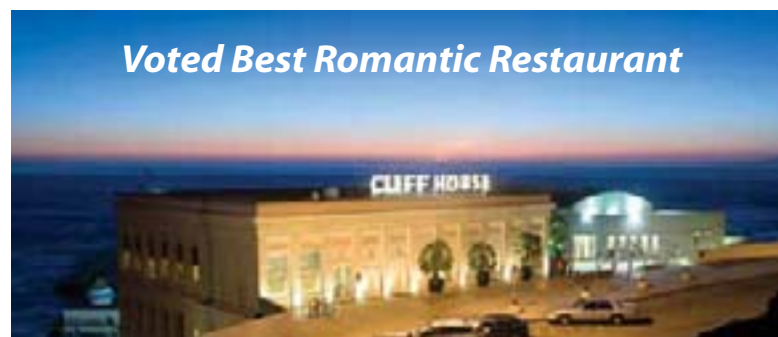
## Let me tell you about those dogs: one foot long, pure beef hot dogs in a steamed bun.

Miss Bigelow may reveal it in the *Chron*.

If you do want to try out for Catherine Bigelow's column, go to Sam's for the seafood. Thick slabs of Petrale or other catch-of-the-day fish like boned Rex Sole. The Olympia oysters, Dungeness crab and bay shrimp are the freshest. And befitting a restaurant that opened in 1867, there are a number of old-timey offerings on the long menu like Hangtown fry, oyster milk stew, mock turtle soup, and celery Victor. Yes, I said 1867. Sam's began as an oyster stall in an open air market.

green, sweet pickle relish. Then — and this is the crowning embellishment — please move smartly to the onion machine. How many restaurants do you know that have an onion machine? I have no idea how it works but you hold your hot, adorned dog under a nozzle, turn a handle and the machine cranks out chopped raw onion. And chopped raw onion is exactly what is required.

*Our columnist Ernest Beyl has more classics up his sleeve and says he will write about them another time. E-mail: ernest@marinatimes.com*



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# Looking inside:

## Artist Mike Kelley at L.A.'s MOCA

by sharon anderson

THE LARGEST EXHIBITION OF MIKE Kelley's work will take up the entire space that is the Geffen Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, from March 31 to July 28, 2014. Kelley's body of work isn't easily categorized — he was a visual artist who utilized paint, sculpture, assemblage, fabric, music, the spoken word, film, photography — all with a counterculture twist that deconstructs assumptions of art and society.

Kelley was born in Detroit and moved to Los Angeles in 1976, where he became a defining influence in the contemporary art world. As an artist, teacher and collaborator, his work dug deep under the surface of culture and personal identity with a dark wit and defiance of tradition that defined his style, regardless of the medium.

Interaction with the peculiar sparks the viewer's imagination. I'm reminded of a Mike Kelley exhibition I attended a few years ago. A group of museumgoers, myself included, stood around a roped-off area. Piled against the wall inside this area was a collection of soiled, torn plush toys (a Kelley theme), strewn on the floor around a cardboard box with an open lid. The stuffed animals looked abandoned. Dead. Forgotten.

"What's inside?" I turned to look at a small, older man dressed in a smart three-piece suit. He was asking me the question.

"I'm too short," he said. "I can't see inside the box. Can you see what's inside?"

We both leaned in on our tiptoes, straining to see. "No, I can't see anything," I said. "Maybe we aren't supposed to see inside the box. Or maybe it's just empty?"

"It could have more toys in it!" he answered. My new acquaintance then told enthusiastic stories of other Mike Kelley exhibitions, events and installations he'd witnessed through the years. Others stopped to listen. He compared what we were viewing to Kurt Schwitters's Merzbau, and elaborated on the ways that abstract spaces can change what is visually possible.



*More Love Hours Than Can Ever Be Repaid and The Wages of Sin, 1987, fabric toys on afghans on canvas; wax candles on wood and metal base*  
PHOTO: COURTESY MIKE KELLEY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

His excitement turned into a moment of self-conscious apprehension. He became quiet, looked at his shoes. "I'm sorry. I'm getting so carried away. I'm talking far too much, and we are in a museum." "No, it's fantastic what you've said," I replied. "Thank you." We laughed, the moment of self-doubt now evaporated.

That's my favorite Mike Kelley memory: Standing in a museum side-by-side with a stranger, our arms around each other, quietly giggling amongst Kelley's obliterated toys.

Sharon Anderson is an artist and writer in Southern California. She can be reached at [www.mindtheimage.com](http://www.mindtheimage.com).

### BELLINGHAM

CONTINUED from page 1

now know that we have to hang in there, that survival depends on having the drive to continue." As the old jazz number goes, "Keeping On with the Keep-On." ... Portrait artist **Jack Keating** keeps on. Jack is a fixed point in an ever-changing world. His portraits of literary figures hang in the Hotel Rex, an establishment dedicated to writers and artists. Though nostalgia ain't what it used to be, some nostalgia is good.

Dr. **Harvey Caplan**, a real Marina luminary and humanitarian, is recovering from a nasty fight with pneumonia at CPMC, formerly Davies Medical Center. He likes visitors. "He sure gets visitors," says a hospital staffer. "I think he's had 333 of them." ... Speaking of popularity, **Henry Tang** has reopened his Little Henry's Restaurant in Polk Gulch after a serious fire a few days before Thanksgiving. The locals are delirious with joy. "It broke my heart because Thanksgiving is our biggest day of the year," says


Henry, who started his Little Henry's in the Marina in 1989. "But it's great to be back." Welcome back, Henry. Now we can have escargot for breakfast again. ... If you've visited Joey's cafe on O'Farrell and Jones, you may wonder where Rusty, the pterodactyl with a 10-foot wingspan hanging from the ceiling, may have gone. Not to worry. Rusty is being cleaned and is in storage while the cafe undergoes a renovation. That's a good change. **Drea Ford** will address any questions about Rusty. She's the local barista and paleontologist.

I assumed it would always be there, the Big Apple Discount Center on Polk and Clay. But it's gone now. After decades of serving Russian Hill and mid-Polk residents, the Big Apple owners have called it a day and have retired. After selling the produce and a wide array of comestibles to clear the store, all that was left at the end was a pile of mousetraps. ... That's not all. Across the street, the Red Devil Lounge, a great little nightclub that offered

top pop acts from around the world, has also shut down for good. The owner wants to "seek other interests." That usually means these days that the lease expired. I will miss both of these venerable places. Yes, the days of wine and roses are laughing and running away.

Friends of **Parker Ralph**, a true San Francisco character and Nob Hill fixture, are gathering at the Holiday Inn on Van Ness on March 5. Parker, who was a sniper in Vietnam, was always on target with a witty line or a scathing assessment. He was a terrific guitar player. As a kid, he was a session player in Detroit. He even let me sit in from time to time at Cresta's Bar on Polk Street. Parker was only 64 when died from cancer. He's missed on the hill, and the town is a bit poorer without him. His death is one change for San Francisco that's not good at all. ...

Bruce Bellingham is the author of Bellingham by the Bay. Yeah, we know, we know. He can be reached at [bruce@marinatimes.com](mailto:bruce@marinatimes.com)



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# 'One Chance'

by michael snyder

GET READY FOR A SHOCK. A JADED reviewer prone to cynicism is about to recommend an earnest dock-drama about a sad sack who enters a reality-TV talent competition. To be fair, I did more than just tolerate *One Chance*, which is based on the true story of a timid, working-class shop clerk/amateur tenor named Paul Potts who dreams of becoming an opera singer and is determined to make it happen on the program *Britain's Got Talent*. I fully enjoyed this underdog-against-the-odds movie, despite certain things about it that might ordinarily put me off.

First things first. If you have no interest in reality TV or those endlessly proliferating reality-TV contests, you're a little like me. They might be the bane of my existence — especially because they take hours away from scripted drama and comedy. The likes of *American Idol* and *America's Got Talent* are certainly, as Foo Fighters' leader Dave Grohl is reputed to have said, an unfortunate way to mislead young would-be musicians into thinking that success and stardom in the entertainment industry has less to do with years of practice, performance and determination than with passing a couple of auditions and engaging in a series of sing-offs. But these shows aren't a new phenomenon; they go back to *Ted Mack's Original Amateur Hour*, a popular series in the early days of television (and before that, on radio).

The unabashed truth is that some participants in shows of this ilk really go on to stardom, albeit manufactured. And there is a certain measure of performing skill that's necessary if you're going to give it your best shot. *One Chance* does a solid job of illustrating the dedication and devotion (and desperation) that can fuel the wannabes who enter the fray in search of fame. And the movie presents portly, genial James Corden with his first serious, high-profile feature film lead after a number of supporting roles — usually as comic relief.

Corden is no new discovery. He's been a British television star since 2007 when he debuted as one of the principle characters in the popular situation comedy *Gavin & Stacey*, which he also co-created and co-wrote. Furthermore, he won the 2012 Tony Award for best actor in a play for his performance in the Broadway run of *One Man, Two Guvnors*. Corden's likeable, vulnerable quality, coupled with his girth, put him in the company of such sweet-natured, plus-sized funnymen as Jackie Gleason, Chris Farley and John Candy. Those attributes also make Corden a natural to embody Paul Potts.

*One Chance* offers some background depicting the childhood abuse Paul absorbed from his schoolmates — bullying that is shown to have continued into his teens and beyond. This was a decent kid from a hardscrabble background who discovered the beauty of opera and dared to believe that he could learn to sing like Pavarotti. So, of course, the movie version of Paul is continu-



Underdogs take on the odds in *One Chance* PHOTO: © RELEVANT ENTERTAINMENT

ally harassed by his peers and belittled by his tough-guy father — circumstances that are only partially leavened by his mother's support. Still, Paul is determined to pursue a singing career, even if it means giving up the shaky security of a shop-assistant job and jeopardizing a possible romance, so he can travel to Italy to study the basics of opera and hone his vocal prowess.

Obviously, *One Chance* takes a few liberties with biographical details and dramatizes elements and situations from Paul's life. But the essentials regarding his appearance on *Britain's Got Talent* — singing in front of Simon Cowell and the other judges as a massive national audience watched — are a matter of public record, as are the results.

This sort of endeavor could be manipulative — and to be fair, *One Chance* can't help but tug at your heartstrings, even when screenwriter Justin Zackham's script is a by-the-numbers affair. It's a tribute to director David Frankel that there's a minimum of saccharine shoveled at the viewer. Then again, Frankel helmed 2006's *The Devil Wears Prada*, the delightfully snarky look at the fashion industry; thus, I went into *One Chance*

hoping for the best, and am pleased to report that I didn't suffer a sap attack. Additionally, the tale is sold by a cast of veteran actors including the steadfast, earthy Colm Meaney and Julie Walters as Paul's parents, and the reliably funny Mackenzie Crook as Paul's off-the-wall pal and co-worker. Lesser-known yet equally fine, Alexandra Roach plays Paul's patient-to-a-fault love interest.

For all of those positives, none of it would mean much unless Corden delivered as Paul. You have to believe that this pudgy, shy regular guy has what it takes to reach for and possibly attain success in the lofty realm of classical music — and you have to care about the man. You do, thanks to Corden. Paul's heart is the essence of *One Chance*, and Corden makes it beat.

*One Chance* opens March 14 at Landmark Theatres Embarcadero Center Cinema.

*Michael Snyder is a print and broadcast journalist who covers pop culture every week on KPFK/Pacifica Radio's David Feldman Show, and on Michael Snyder's Culture Blast, available online at YouTube and Digidiv TV. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster*

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HUMOR :: Lost and found

# The art of freecycling in the city

by sandy fertman ryan

SAN FRANCISCO IS FULL OF TREASURES. There is the ever-majestic Golden Gate Bridge, the perfectly crooked Lombard Street (a.k.a. Not the Best Street for Playing Kick Ball), and the wild parrots of San Francisco doing what they do best: waking up everyone from the Presidio to Telegraph Hill with their enthusiastic squawking.

But what about the undiscovered treasures of the city? Say, for instance, the abandoned stuff that San Franciscans leave on the sidewalk for any passerby. You know, the stuff that has a piece of paper taped on it, bearing one seductive word, "FREE!"

You probably pass by these items without a second thought, but if you stop and look at what people throw away, it can be a real eye-opener — and sometimes there are little gems to be had. I've found sealed perfumes and cosmetics, unread books, antique picture frames, ornate mirrors, industrial baking shelves, vintage dining chairs, and the pièce de résistance: a working flat-screen TV with remote (OK, it was about 5 to 10 years old with a 1990s-style converter box — but still, it works!). Bam!

You'll also find the clichéd pile of men's clothing that one can imagine floating, piece by piece (to the music of an Italian opera) from the window of a Marina apartment building during the heat of an argument. I never touch clothes on the

street though, because you never know if the couple is going to make up — though if my husband did that to my clothes, well, let's just say that would be the last Italian opera he ever heard. And who wants to touch a grown man's holey, running shorts, circa 1998? I do have standards, you know.

What is surprising is what items an owner considers valuable enough to not toss in the garbage, where they usually belong. Sometimes, this "setting out" of stuff can be a wonderful act of generosity, even if we, the Dumpees, don't see the items as having any true market value. For example, I have found many beaten-up cat trees on the sidewalks of San Francisco. If you stop and think about it, someone who recently lost their beloved cat — who obviously adored this now stained, furry, and shredded piece of furniture — is offering Joe Blow this essentially "priceless" object in terms of sentimental value. It is such an endearing act that I can't help but feel my heart drop every time I walk by one of those hideous trees. But walk by I do because I have no need for a used, saliva-coated cat post, especially because I don't have a cat. If I did though, I'd be all over it.

Another strange hobby of mine is that I like to take photographs of the hidden

treasures that were abandoned on the street on New Year's Eve. My favorite was a single, gorgeous, barely worn, red leather stiletto sitting at the foot of an expired parking meter on Polk Street. Oh, the stories it could have told — or perhaps the woman who walked home in just one stiletto could have told. I have found personal journals and calendars, possibly tossed from windows as a spontaneous gesture of getting rid of the old and ringing in the new. Sadly, the entries weren't as interesting as I would have expected, e.g., "Tuesday. Had my hair extensions

removed today. I cried a little, but it's just hair. Right?" or "Oct. 3, 2012, Nutritionist 4 p.m., Bikram Yoga 5 p.m., Martinis at Mauna Loa 6:30 p.m.! Yyyyy!"

I have unfortunately found undergarments, too — both men's and women's — again, a casting off the old and ringing in of the brand-new, super comfy Fruit of the Loom. My best find, though, was a case of unopened raspberry-flavored vodka drinks, apparently not quite a hit at a New Year's Eve party. I don't know what they were thinking, though — they were pretty tasty!

The best time to find some nifty items abandoned on the street is right after a move — or near the end of a move when everyone is too exhausted to pick up that

last box. Maybe it's a tip of the hat to the 'hood, a thanks-for-the-memories offering, or maybe the owners just couldn't fit everything into the truck, but in any event, their loss is our gain. There are dressers, paper shredders, DVD players, paintings — and hangers. Lots and lots of hangers. But the thing that gets me is all the love involved. I know that sounds corny, but even though these throwaways appear to be junk, they were truly loved by someone as evidenced by the fact that the owner just didn't have the heart to toss them into the dumpster. They still had some value remaining. Most people may just see an object for what it is: a dusty box of cracked-up Styx and Rush CDs. But to me, I can feel the love.

Judging from my recent "finds," I think it's safe to say that my fellow San Franciscans are not only altruistic, but really take their recycling (and freecycling) seriously. There is always treasure to be found in San Francisco, whether it be a stunning view or a mind-blowing heap of junk. Still, the least appreciated of those treasures are definitely you big-hearted San Franciscans. Oh, yes, you! And thanks a ton for the hangers! Maybe I'll finally get around to rehang my husband's clothing.

*Sandy Fertman Ryan has written for several magazines, including Parade, American Woman and Seventeen. The most recent item she left on the sidewalk was her keys. E-mail: yipee633@yahoo.com*

**Look at what people throw away; it can be a real eye-opener.**

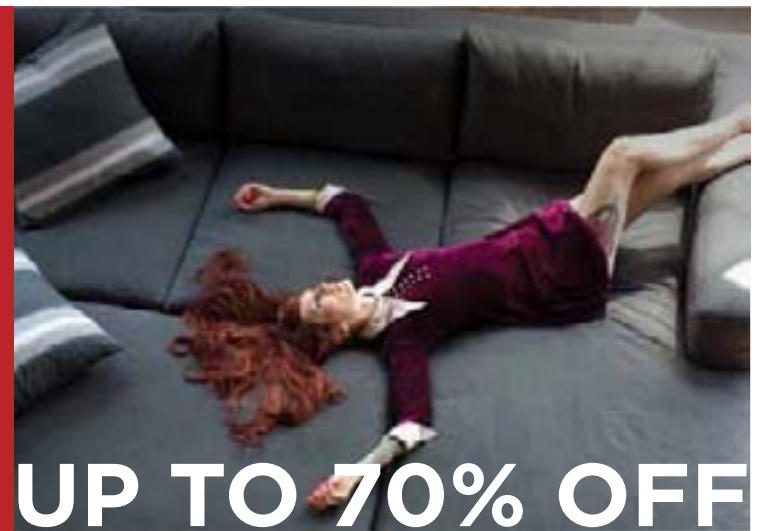
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# Home is where the art is

by michael snyder

**A**RT IS WHERE YOU FIND IT, and I usually know where to look. In fact, both San Francisco and Los Angeles offer some marvelous fine art museums that allow one to drink one's fill of beauty and provocation.

## THE DRAW OF GALLERIES

Considering its expanse and population, Los Angeles is understandably loaded in the museum department: The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Getty, the Geffen, the Skirball Center, the Hammer, and so on. But ultimately, it's the galleries that draw me in, whether Los Angeles or San Francisco.

When we can't get to the National Gallery in London or the Louvre in Paris or the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, we can see the masters in coffee-table books or on video. But if we want to see the up-and-comers, the discoveries and the less famous, the galleries are where to go — and where the chic, freaks and geeks frequently intersect.

The Diego Rivera Gallery at the San Francisco Art Institute on Russian Hill is a favorite. It's a student-directed exhibi-

tion space and the home to the historic Diego Rivera mural. Something about the energy of young creators and their freedom to experiment in a learning environment is undeniably attractive. And there are more niche galleries like the San Francisco Art Exchange, which specializes in what the management calls "the popular image," including renowned graphic designers and rock 'n' roll photographers.

## EXCITING EXHIBITIONS IN S.F.

But ultimately, I find myself trusting and relying upon certain curators whose tastes are aligned with my own or who can open me up to new work that excites me. Thus, I embrace the likes of Varnish Gallery where an exhibition by the East Bay-based pop surrealist Isabel Samaras dazzled with finely wrought mashed-up images of pop-culture icons like the castaways from the '60s sitcom *Gilligan's Island* sporting Maori warrior tattoos — or Captain Kirk and Lieutenant Spock of *Star Trek* re-imagined as an amorous Lone Ranger and Tonto.

My most recent visit to my go-to San Francisco art-ery, White Walls/The Shooting Gallery on Geary at the edge of the Tenderloin, was the usual revelation with the efforts of

disparate artists on display. Owner-curator Justin Giarla is all about challenging, witty, graphically bold work. A typically fantastical White Walls show was Robert X. Burden's *Toy Box*, featuring massive oil paintings of multiple superhero action figures from Batman to the Thundercats and G.I. Joe laid out to recall a strange cross between a religious Middle Ages tapestry and religious frieze.

## KNITTED DOILIES AND OLD BOOKS

The standouts at the latest White Walls exhibition I attended included *I Haven't a Single Explorer on My Planet* by Polish-born, New York City-based artist Olek — a crochet installation with a full-sized boat at its center, which Olek characterized as an expression and symbol of liberty. To be precise, it was an entire room with walls, floor and ceiling covered by multicolored knitted doilies; in the center of the space was a dinghy, completely enclosed in crochet. To enter and investigate, patrons had to don cloth booties to protect the knitting while padding around on it.

But for me, the real stunner at this show was *Re-imagination of the Book*, a subtle and thoroughly original mix of found object,

collage, diorama, and meta-text from British artist Kerry Miller. Enclosed in clear plastic cases, Miller's pieces are old books that are cut apart and rebuilt as magnificent portals to the illustrations that were once within but are now trimmed, spruced up with ink and watercolors, rearranged, refined and recalibrated. Thus *A Hand-Book to the Order of Lepidoptera*, a volume from 1896, becomes a veritable 3-D explosion of butterflies that appear to be erupting out of the open volume and remain in place as if frozen in flight. Another book about flora and fauna now seems to be a blooming garden set in its carved-out pages.

## INTRIGUING L.A. GALLERIES

To say this visit to White Walls was thrilling might not be an understatement. And of course, there are similarly invigorating gallery experiences to be had in Los Angeles. The nomadic GhettoGloss space overseen by the peripatetic Fiora Boes is currently ensconced in the eastside Eagle Rock neighborhood, but I fondly recall a night at the Melrose Avenue location in Hollywood that spotlighted the droll and extensive kitsch art collection of songwriter Allee Willis, not to mention a karaoke machine, at least one member of

Earth, Wind & Fire, and a fantastic Korean-Mexican fusion food truck in the parking lot.

Last but never least, I need to give props to the Merry Karnowsky Gallery on La Brea, where I'm always intrigued and stimulated by the exhibitions and regularly dazzled and delighted. Karnowsky presents a plethora of brilliant artists, including someone I consider the king of the pop-surrealists and a master of the Lowbrow art movement, Todd Schorr. The last opening I attended here was a high-profile Los Angeles showcase for the posthumously acclaimed street photographer Vivian Maier, whose pedestrian career as a nanny and her fiercely private nature kept her talents a secret. After Maier died, an enormous cache of negatives and prints were discovered at an auction, and her insightful, sometimes beautiful, sometimes gritty photos became known. *Finding Vivian Maier*, a feature-length documentary film about her and the discovery of her work was set for release this year. But I had a chance to get up close and personal with her art because I have the good sense to hit some remarkable galleries, whether up north or down south.

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# MARCH EVENTS

## what not to miss this month

### MAJOR EVENTS



#### 8th Annual S.F. International Chocolate Salon

Sunday, March 15, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.  
Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

Over 40 chocolatiers, confectioners, wineries, and other culinary artisans participate in this annual artisan, gourmet and premium chocolate event that includes tastings, talks and more. \$20–\$30, [www.sfchocolatesalon.com](http://www.sfchocolatesalon.com)

#### 163rd Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade & Festival

Saturday, March 16, 11:30 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Market Street (at Powell) to Civic Center Plaza

Before, during and after the parade, find a hub of Irish culture at Civic Center Plaza with corned beef sandwiches, Irish bands and dancers, kids' activities (petting zoo, pony rides, etc.), and booths with arts and crafts and community and cultural information. Parade begins at 11:30 a.m.

#### Bouquets to Art: Celebrating 30 Years of Art through Flowers

Tue–Sun, March 18–23, 9:30 a.m.–5:15 p.m.  
de Young Museum

Each of over 125 floral designers chooses a piece of art from the museum's collection and creates a floral work of art to complement it in this popular weeklong exhibition. \$22, 415-750-3504, [www.bouquetstoart.org](http://www.bouquetstoart.org)

#### Macy's 68th Annual Flower Show: A Secret Garden

Daily, March 23–April 6  
Macy's Union Square

Navigate the lush landscape at your own pace, or take a guided tour, then enjoy more festivities including fashion events, exotic cooking demos, and more. 415-397-3333, [www.macys.com/flowershow](http://www.macys.com/flowershow)



#### Intimate Impressionism from the National Gallery of Art

Tue–Sun, March 29–Aug. 3, 9:30 a.m.–5:15 p.m.  
Legion of Honor

This exhibition showcases approximately 70 Impressionist and Post-Impressionist landscapes, seascapes, still lifes, interiors, and portraits, from the collections of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. \$22, 415-750-3600, [www.famsf.org](http://www.famsf.org)

### LAST CHANCE

#### Modern Nature: Georgia O'Keeffe and Lake George

Tue–Sun thru March 17, 9:30 a.m.–5:15 p.m.  
deYoung Museum

From magnified botanical compositions to panoramic landscapes, the works in this exhibition offer a deeper understanding of O'Keeffe's spirit of place that was essential to her artistic evolution. \$28–\$45, 415-750-3600, [www.famsf.org](http://www.famsf.org)

#### Magnolias by Moonlight & Magnolia Cocktails

Saturday, March 15, 7–9 p.m.  
Thursday, March 27, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

S.F. Botanical Garden, Golden Gate Park

Meander through the garden's moonlit paths of fragrant and luminescent magnolias in a guided tour that includes hot tea and cookies; enjoy hors d'oeuvres and cocktails garnished with magnolia petals. Registration required. \$20; \$30, 415-661-1316 ext. 400, [www.sfbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.sfbotanicalgarden.org)

#### Film Series: Fellini Mini-Retrospective

Sundays thru March 16, 4 p.m.  
Museo ItaloAmericano, Bldg. C, Fort Mason Center

Enjoy this retrospective celebrating key films from the work of Federico Fellini. Films are in Italian with English subtitles. \$5, 415-673-2200, [www.museoitaloamericano.org](http://www.museoitaloamericano.org)

### COMMUNITY CORNER

#### Sunday Streets: Embarcadero

Sun, March 9, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Pier 52 to Fisherman's Wharf

Come celebrate the kickoff of the 2014 season on the waterfront and experience the car-free stretch designed to get you out and active in our diverse neighborhoods. Free, [www.sundaystreetsf.com](http://www.sundaystreetsf.com)

#### S.F.'s Watch Dogs — The Civil Grand Jury

Tuesday, March 11, 6:30 p.m.  
Western Addition Branch Library (1550 Scott St.)

Learn how the grand jury works, how issues are selected, how investigations are undertaken, and what happens with the jury's findings and recommendations in this community meeting that includes a brief presentation by former civil grand jurors and a Q. and A. 415-355-5727, [www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org)

### GALAS & BENEFITS

#### YMCA 3rd Annual Y for Youth Luncheon: Y Then, Y Now?

Friday, March 7, noon–1:30 p.m.  
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Philanthropists, business and community leaders and civic activists will come together and hear firsthand how we can all make a difference in the lives of youth today. \$500 & up, 415-281-6734, [www.ymcasf.org/yforyouth](http://www.ymcasf.org/yforyouth)

#### American Bach Soloists 25th Season Celebration

Friday, March 21, 5 p.m.  
Haas-Lilienthal House (2007 Franklin St.)

Enjoy champagne, hors d'oeuvres, a live auction and a concert featuring baritone Mischa Bouvier in support of the orchestra, chorus and soloists. \$250, 415-621-7900, [www.americanbach.org](http://www.americanbach.org)

#### 20th Annual Art Inspiring Hope Gala

Saturday, March 29, 5 p.m.  
Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

Support Camp Okizu, a summer program for Bay Area children with cancer and their families at this year's gala, Carnival. Cheryl Jennings and Carolyn Johnson from ABC7 News will M.C. \$275, 415-382-1503, [www.okizu.org](http://www.okizu.org)

#### Bouquets to Arts 2013 Opening Night Gala

Monday, March 17, 7–10 p.m.  
de Young Museum

Enjoy an exclusive preview of 125 exhibits created by outstanding Bay Area florists, inspired by and paired with the museum's permanent art collection. The evening will also feature a sumptuous dinner, specialty cocktails and lively entertainment. \$300 & up, 415-750-3604, [www.bouquetstoart.org](http://www.bouquetstoart.org)

#### Celebrate Spring 2014: Diamonds are Forever

Fri–Sat, March 21–22  
Flood Mansion (2222 Broadway) & Bimbo's 365 Club (1025 Columbus Ave.)

This major fundraising event for the Schools of the Sacred Heart includes a luncheon and boutique with dozens of vendors and custom-made Easter baskets, a flower mart, and a gala with a 007-inspired theme. 415-345-5825, [www.celebratespring.org](http://www.celebratespring.org)

### ARTS & CULTURE



#### 11th Annual Crossroads Irish-American Festival

Various days thru March 30  
Various S.F. venues

Exploring and celebrating the history of the Irish diaspora, this cultural and literary event includes creative performance, music, film, readings, storytelling, theater, and more. Free–\$100, 415-810-3774, [www.irishamericancrossroads.org](http://www.irishamericancrossroads.org)

#### Daniel Grant & Rachell Reichert: Photography & Graphite Drawings

Tue–Sat, March 8–April 7, 10:30 a.m.–5 p.m.  
SFMOMA Artists Gallery, Bldg. A, Fort Mason Center

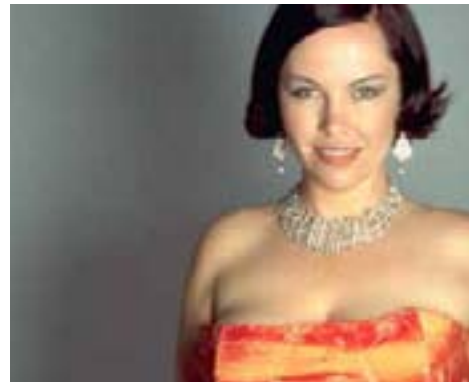
Grant's photographic series features compelling vignettes of women taken with a Diana, a midcentury plastic camera, and Reichert's large-scale graphite drawings of figures and flowers reference 17th-century vanitas painting, Renaissance nudes, and more. Free, 415-441-4777, [www.sfmoma.org/artistsgallery](http://www.sfmoma.org/artistsgallery)

#### SFUSD Arts Festival

Daily, March 15–23, 9:45 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Asian Art Museum

This annual celebration of student creativity includes a visual art exhibition featuring artwork by 2,000 students, live musical and dance performances, screenings of student films and videos, poetry readings, and hands-on art activities. Free, 415-695-2441 <http://sfusdartsfestival.org>

### PERFORMANCES



#### Lavy Smith & Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers

Thu–Sun, March 6–9  
S.F. Jazz Center (201 Franklin St.)

Hear the thrilling gypsy jazz Hot Club then celebrate the music of Kansas City with Lavy Smith performing blues and big band swing. \$25, 415-398-5655, [www.sfjazz.org](http://www.sfjazz.org)

#### 30th Annual Bay Area Harmony Sweepstakes A Cappella Festival

Saturday, March 8, 8 p.m.  
Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

From vocal jazz to doo-wop, barbershop to pop and all styles in between, experience amazement at the versatility of the human voice on display in this most exhilarating evening of vocal harmony singing. \$29.50, 415-392-4400, [www.harmony-sweepstakes.com](http://www.harmony-sweepstakes.com)

#### Baroque Ensemble

Sat–Sun, March 8–9  
S.F. Conservatory of Music (50 Oak St.)

Enjoy a concert of Handel's *Serse*, an opera series in three acts. A 1:15 lecture precedes Sunday's 2 p.m. performance. Free, reservations required at 415-503-6275, <http://sfc.edu>

#### African-American Shakespeare Co.: Medea

Saturday, March 8–30  
Buriel Clay Theater (762 Fulton St.)

The company presents Euripides' famous Greek tragedy about a jilted wife exacting the ultimate revenge on her cheating husband. \$12.50–\$37.50, 800-838-3006, [www.african-americanshakes.org](http://www.african-americanshakes.org)

#### Anna Deavere Smith: Letter from Birmingham Jail

Monday, March 10, 7:30 p.m.  
Grace Cathedral

The actor-playwright appears with renowned violinist Robert McDuffie and pianist Anne Epperson for a performance of Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous letter. \$30–\$150, 415-392-4400, [www.gracecathedral.org](http://www.gracecathedral.org)

#### Judy Collins

Saturday, March 15, 8 p.m.  
The Venetian Room (Fairmont S.F.)

You won't want to miss the Grammy Award-winner, Oscar nominee, activist, and best-selling author singing folk, pop, Broadway, and American Songbook tunes along with the classic renditions that have made her one of America's most revered artists. \$65, 415-927-4636, [www.bayareacabaret.org](http://www.bayareacabaret.org)

#### S.F. Playhouse: Bauer

Tue–Thu, March 18–April 19  
Kensington Park Hotel (450 Post St.)

This production tells the compelling and controversial tale of a world-renowned artist who was so driven to create that he sketched on scraps in a Nazi prison, yet eventually stopped painting forever due to his feud with his curator lover and a patron — Solomon Guggenheim. A concurrent exhibition of Bauer's works is on display March 15–April 30 at the Weinstein Gallery (383 Geary St., 415-362-8151, [www.weinstein.com](http://www.weinstein.com)). \$30–\$200, 415-677, [www.sfplayhouse.org](http://www.sfplayhouse.org)



#### Ruth Asawa S.F. School of the Arts: Hair

Fri–Sat, March 21–22, 8 p.m.  
Thu–Fri, March 27–28, 8 p.m.

Southside Theater, Bldg. D, Fort Mason Center Don't miss the musical about the 1960s Summer of Love that introduced rock 'n' roll to the stage with unforgettable songs including "Aquarius," "Hair," "Good Morning Starshine," and others. \$20, 415-695-5700, [www.sfsotatheatre.org](http://www.sfsotatheatre.org)

#### Concerts at the Presidio: Songs for an Evening in Spring

Thu–Fri, March 21–22, 7:30 p.m.  
Golden Gate Club (135 Fisher Loop), the Presidio

This concert performance by soprano Rachele Woolston, mezzo-soprano Lisa van der Ploeg and baritone Eugene Brancoveanu features selections from *Oklahoma!*, *Man of la Mancha*, *Madama Butterfly*, *My Fair Lady*, *Die Fledermaus*, and more; young violinist Megan Rohrer performs Saint-Saëns and Paganini. \$15, limited seating; reservations recommended at 415-447-6274, [www.presidio.gov](http://www.presidio.gov)

#### Chanticleer: Atlantic Crossing

Fri–Sat, March 21–22, 8 p.m.  
S.F. Conservatory of Music

Collaborating with violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the New Century Chamber Orchestra, this program explores the creative time between the two world wars when European musicians crossed the Atlantic to join New York's musical life. \$25–\$29, 415-392-4400, [www.chanticleer.org](http://www.chanticleer.org)



#### Liza Minnelli

Friday, March 28  
Davies Symphony Hall

The stage and screen multiple award-winner will perform with her septet, singing favorite American standards. \$65–\$130, 415-864-6000, [www.sfsymphony.com](http://www.sfsymphony.com)



## NIGHTLIFE

### Service Industry Wednesday

Wednesdays, 9 p.m.

The Parlor (2801 Leavenworth St.)

Hawaii'an singer-guitarist-keyboardist-percussionist musician Matt Bolton provides live rock and pop covers into the night, while hotel and restaurant employees enjoy \$3 drink specials. 415-775-5110, [www.theparlorsf.com](http://www.theparlorsf.com)



### After Dark: Extended Cinemas

Thursday, March 6, 6–10 p.m.

Exploratorium (Pier 15)

Explore films and the art of film from a whole new perspective — seeing, hearing, touching, and interacting. Ages 18+, Free–\$15, 415-548-444, [www.exploratorium.edu](http://www.exploratorium.edu)

### The Humidors (CD Release Party)

Saturday, March 8, 9:30 p.m.

Boom Boom Room (1601 Fillmore St.)

Join the release party for The Humidors' debut album, filled with enough funk, vintage R&B, and slow-burn soul to keep you going until the party ends at 2:45 a.m. Also appearing: Jordan & The Ritual and D.J. K-OS. Ages 21+, \$10, 415-655-5600, [www.boombooblues.com](http://www.boombooblues.com)

### Yea-Ming, Eternal Drag

Saturday, March 22, 9 p.m.

Hemlock Tavern (1131 Polk St.)

Hear the solo vision and version of Yea-Ming, the singer-songwriter for San Francisco-based Dreamdate. \$6, 415-923-0923, [www.hemlocktavern.com](http://www.hemlocktavern.com)

## FILM & LECTURES

### Lynne Sharon Swartz

Monday, March 3, 7 p.m.

Books Inc. (2251 Chestnut St.)

The novelist, poet, and essayist discusses her new memoir, *This Is Where We Came In: Intimate Glimpses*. Free, [www.booksinc.net](http://www.booksinc.net)



### San Francisco International Ocean Film Festival

Daily, March 5–9

Bay Theater (Pier 39) & Aquarium of the Bay

In this showcase dedicated to inspiring appreciation and care for the oceans through independent films, panel discussions and film screenings tell the stories of the sea. *Individual films \$8–15, multi-film passes and gala tickets also available*, [www.oceanfilmfest.org](http://www.oceanfilmfest.org)

### 9th Annual Women's Film Festival

Saturday, March 7 & 29

Brava Theater & The New Parkway

The festival will showcase the best short films directed by women to commemorate Women's History Month. *Ticket information at [www.womensfilmfestival.org](http://www.womensfilmfestival.org), 415-754-3456*

### CAAMFest

Daily, March 13–23

Various Bay Area locations

Starting with *How to Fight in Six Inch Heels* on its opening night and continuing through South Korean crime thrillers, Asian American documentaries, and world premieres, CAAMFest — formerly the San Francisco Asian American Film Festival — features an 11-day celebration of film, music, and food. *Contact for pricing*, [www.caamedia.org](http://www.caamedia.org)

### Simon Schama:

#### Story of the Jews — Finding the Words

Wednesday, March 19, noon

Commonwealth Club (595 Market St.)

The author, PBS/BBC documentary host, historian, and master storyteller will discuss with journalist Jonathan Curiel his latest work, *The Story of the Jews: Finding the Words, 1000 BCE to 1492 CE*. Free–\$20, 415-597-6705, [www.commonwealthclub.org](http://www.commonwealthclub.org)

## SCIENCE & THE ENVIRONMENT

### How to Improve the Condition of Your Soil

Saturday, March 8, 3–4 p.m.

Presidio Branch Library (3150 Sacramento St.)

Learn about the sustainable ways to care for your plants; the beneficial critters in compost and the many pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, and chemical fertilizers that kill them; and about natural products and techniques to support healthy garden soil. Free, 415-322-2880, [www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org)

### Where's Rosie? The State of Personal Robotics

Monday, March 10, 6 p.m.

Commonwealth Club (595 Market St.)

Experts from academia and the robotics industry discuss the challenges to bringing general-use, multipurpose robots to your home. Free–\$20, 415-597-6705, [www.commonwealthclub.org](http://www.commonwealthclub.org)

### Pandemic! A Plan for the Planet

Tuesday, March 11, 7:30 p.m.

Nourse Theater (275 Hayes St.)

Grab your surgical face mask and head to this program in which Nathan Wolfe discusses pandemic control and the secrets of the planet's dominant life form: the virus. \$27, 415-392-4400, [www.cityarts.net](http://www.cityarts.net)



### AltCar Expo

Fri–Sat, March 13–15, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Craneway Pavilion (1414 Harbor Way So., Richmond)

Test drive the newest electric, hydrogen, natural gas, propane, and hybrid vehicles; visit the exhibition hall; and more at this showcase for alternative vehicles. Free, 310-390-2930, [www.altcarexponorcal.com](http://www.altcarexponorcal.com)

### 26th Annual Pi Day

Thu, March 14, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Exploratorium

To honor the never-ending number 3.14159 (and Einstein's birthday), the museum will serve up  $\pi$ -themed activities, rituals, antics, and plenty of pie. Free, 415-528-4360, [www.exploratorium.edu](http://www.exploratorium.edu)

### Beyond the Green Bin

Monday, March 24, 6–7:15 p.m.

Commonwealth Club (595 Market St.)

Hear a panel discussion and join the conversation about how to turn food waste into food resources. \$8, 415-291-3276, [www.cuesa.org](http://www.cuesa.org)

## POTABLES & EDIBLES

### Hummus, Falafel and Brisket — Oh My!

Sunday, March 9, 1–5 p.m.

JCCSF (3200 California St.)

The S.F. Jewish Film Festival presents three fabulous films about food guaranteed to whet your appetite. \$12, 415-292-1200, [www.jccsf.org](http://www.jccsf.org)

### Wine Tasting: Burgundy's Hidden Corners

Thursday, March 12, 4:30–6 p.m.

K&L Wine Merchants (638 Fourth St.)

In conjunction with La Paulee de San Francisco Burgundy Week, enjoy a special tasting of small producers and value-oriented appellations from Burgundy. \$10, 415-896-1734, [www.klwines.com](http://www.klwines.com)



### 8th Annual Artisan Cheese Festival

Fri–Sun, March 21–23

Sheraton Sonoma County, (745 Baywood Dr., Petaluma)

Experience chef demonstrations and pairings, educational sessions, farm tours, and more in this weekend of wine, cheese, chefs, beer, and more. \$45 & up, 707-523-3728, [www.artisancheesefestival.com](http://www.artisancheesefestival.com)

## SPORTS & HEALTH

### 25th Annual Romancing the Island 12K & 25K

March 8, 9:15 a.m.

Angel Island

You'll fall in love with San Francisco all over again as you follow the hilly loop trails circumnavigating Angel Island and savor the panoramic vistas of the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, Alcatraz Island, the East Bay, and Marin County. \$60, 415-868-1829, [www.envirosports.com](http://www.envirosports.com)

### 31st Annual Across the Bay 12K Race

Sunday, March 16, 8:30, 8:45, & 9 a.m.

East Fort Baker to Aquatic Park

Named by *Runner's World* magazine as the Best Bridge Run in America, join the thousands to run this race across the Golden Gate Bridge to support Edgewood Center for Children & Families. \$50–\$60, 415-759-2690, [www.rhodyco.com](http://www.rhodyco.com)

### Yoga Pop-Up Project

Thursday, March 27, 6–7 p.m.

Asian Art Museum

This project partners with art galleries, museums, and other inspirational spaces to draw people to art and yoga thereby creating a new type of artistic community that opens people's bodies through yoga so they can open their minds to art. Presented in conjunction with the exhibition *Yoga: The Art of Transformation*. \$5 with \$12 museum admission, 415-581-3500, [www.asianart.org](http://www.asianart.org)

### 2014 Fight for Air Climb

Saturday, March 29, 8 a.m.

555 California St.

Climb to raise funds to help the American Lung Association fight lung disease. \$25 with \$100 fundraising minimum. 510-982-3149, [www.fightforairclimb.org](http://www.fightforairclimb.org)



### Young Performers Theater: Fantastic Mr. Fox

Fri–Sun thru March 15

Bldg. C, Fort Mason Center

Follow the attempts of three farmers who attempt to get rid of the fox stealing food from their farms in this Roald Dahl classic. \$10, 415-346-5550, [www.ypt.org](http://www.ypt.org)

## CHILD'S PLAY

### The Great Baby Romp

Saturday, March 8, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Observation Post, the Presidio (211 Lincoln Blvd.)

This fun-filled family event will give parents a chance to compare sample classes selected from the over 140 programs in S.F. to find the perfect activity for their child's unique personality. \$60 per family, [www.thegreatbabyromp.com](http://www.thegreatbabyromp.com)

### S.F. Summer Resource Fair

Saturday, March 8, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Balboa High School (1000 Cayuga Ave.)

A convention-style showcase with over 150 exhibitors of summer vacation activities for children, youth, and families; includes summer camp info, class and activity exhibits, youth summer job fair, and fun activities. Free, 415-554-8991, [www.dcyf.org](http://www.dcyf.org)

### Red Panda Acrobats

Saturday, March 8, 1–2 p.m.

Presidio Branch Library (3150 Sacramento St.)

Acrobatics, juggling, balancing, contortion, and more performed by Wayne Huey, featured Red Panda Acrobat, who has amazed and delighted the Bay Area for many years. Free, 415-355-2880, [www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org)



### Grease Sing-Along

Saturday, March 15, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

JCCSF (3200 California St.)

Sing along to on-screen lyrics with John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John and a star-studded cast in this 35th anniversary release of *Grease*. It's Purim Eve, so don your pink jackets, grease up your hair, and let your inhibitions go! Preshow costume competition, goody bags, and an audience hand-jive. \$18, 415-292-1200, [www.jccsf.org](http://www.jccsf.org)

### St. Patrick's Day Party

Tuesday, March 17, 2–6 p.m.

Jamaroo Kids Studio (2001 Pine St.)

Get yer green on and celebrate this fun holiday in a terrific play space. \$5–\$10, 415-614-2001, [www.jamarookids.com](http://www.jamarookids.com)

## CREATURE FEATURES

### Coats for Cubs

Daily thru April 22, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

Buffalo Exchange (1555 Haight St. & 1210 Valencia St.)

Give your furs back to the animals! Your used furs will be donated to rehabilitation organizations across the country to use for bedding and comfort to orphaned and injured wildlife. 415-431-7733, 415-647-8332, [coatsforcubs.com](http://coatsforcubs.com), [buffaloexchange.com](http://buffaloexchange.com)

### 18th Annual CLAW Bark & Whine Ball

Thursday, March 13, 6:30–10 p.m.

Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

Walk the red carpet with your pooch at this black-tie event sponsored by Critter Lovers At Work (CLAW) to support the SF/SPCA's Cinderella Fund, which provides medical treatment for the neediest animals. \$150 & up, 415-552-3535, [www.clawsf.org](http://www.clawsf.org)

## JUST FOR FUN



### Alfred Hitchcock's San Francisco

Sunday, March 9, 11 a.m.

Meet: Huntington Park fountain, Nob Hill

See the hotels, clubs, stores, and other locations featured in *Vertigo* and other Hitchcock classics and hear why he chose them and how he filmed them. Learn their history, architecture, and the stories they tell about the San Francisco of 50 years ago and today. Free (donations welcome), 415-557-4266, <http://sfcityguides.org>

### 3rd Annual Mr. Marina Competition

Wednesday, March 19, 7 p.m.

Regency Center (1290 Sutter St.)

See the contestant who embodies the Marina spirit (social, fun-loving, generous, and manly, yet who occasionally wears pastels and can live elsewhere) while supporting the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. \$45–\$70, [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com)





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## THE URBAN HOME & GARDEN

# The hazards of working with lead-based paint

by julia strzesieski

**S**PRING IS AN IDEAL TIME TO PAINT. But if you're going the do-it-yourself route, keep these hazards in mind. Exposure to lead-based paint is the primary cause of lead poisoning in children. Before 1978, lead-based paint was commonly used on interior and exterior building surfaces, so those (especially children) who live in or work on pre-1978 buildings are at risk of lead poisoning.

Ingesting or inhaling lead particles causes lead poisoning. Lead-based paint chips and lead dust — which can't always be seen — are both serious health hazards. Ingesting or inhaling lead can easily pass unnoticed. Lead can be released into your home during routine activities such as opening and closing windows and doors. Your child might eat sweet-tasting lead-based paint chips, mouth lead dust-covered toys, or teeth on lead-based paint-containing woodwork. You or your child might touch dusty surfaces and then eat food with lead dust on your hands.

Regular maintenance and routine lead-dust cleaning measures are not enough to protect your family when home repairs, remodeling (demolition and construction), and painting (sanding, burning or scraping, and so forth) break lead-based paint-containing surfaces. Lead dust released during these activities can scatter and poison you and your family, pets, neighbors, and workers.

If your home was built before 1978, there is a good chance it may have lead-containing paint, varnish, shellac, or other coatings. Just about any surface that might have been painted with any coating is suspect. Lead-based paint and other lead-containing coatings may be found well below layers of nontoxic paint. If lead-based paint layers are left undamaged, they present little danger. However, special attention should be directed toward surfaces that children can chew or that get a lot of wear and tear, such as windows and window sills, doors and door frames, stairs, railings and banisters, porches and fences. You can prevent harm only by following lead-safe methods.

The key to lead-based paint safety is to prevent exposure in the first place. Work that may break a lead-based paint surface requires special measures. If recent work in your home could have released lead dust, clean immediately — using proper lead-dust cleaning methods — and get yourself and your children tested for lead.

Before you do any work that may break a painted surface — including renova-

tions, remodeling and furniture restoration, as well as plumbing, ventilation and heating duct work, and work on electrical systems — test for lead. You can either send samples to a lab yourself or hire a professional to do a paint inspection for you.

### AVOID THESE DANGEROUS WORK METHODS

- Dry manual scraping or dry sanding without an attached HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Aerosol) vacuum
- Open-flame/propane torching
- Dry abrasive blasting
- Unconfined hydroblasting
- Chemical stripping with methylene chloride, except in localized, well-ventilated touch-up

### OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH LEAD-BASED PAINT HAZARDS

**Replace it.** Replacement is most practical with removable objects, such as furniture, doors, doorjamb, and windows. Replacement means removing the object and replacing it with a lead-free item. Wet the area before prying off wood, scraping or sanding, and use lead-safe cleanup methods. *Do not burn any lead-containing item.* Wrap it, keep it away from children, and remove it from your home.

**Cover it.** Surfaces that cannot be replaced are best covered. Consider covering lead-containing surfaces that are impractical to replace (walls, floors, woodwork) with a long-lasting, tough material like sheetrock, paneling or tiles. This new layer must be kept in good condition. Cracks give a place for lead dust to settle, and they are hard to clean. Fill or seal cracks to make them smooth and cleanable.

**Encapsulate it.** Encapsulants are rolled, brushed or troweled onto the lead-based paint-containing surface. Encapsulation is not a permanent method for covering lead-based paint — if the new surface is not kept in good condition, the lead paint is exposed again, and you are back where you started.

**Remove it.** Remove lead-based paint by sanding, scraping or chemical stripping. Removal creates a lot of lead dust and is therefore the least desirable way to deal with lead-based paint around the home. However, if you choose removal, refinish the surface or lead residue will continue to leach out of the unfinished surface.

Visit the Environmental Protection Agency's website at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) for more information on lead exposure.

Julia Strzesieski is the marketing coordinator for Cole Hardware and can be reached at [julia@marinatimes.com](mailto:julia@marinatimes.com).



If your home is pre-1978, it might have lead-containing paint.

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- 3312 Mission Street (at 29th St.) 415/647-8700  
Everyday 8:00am-8:00pm
- 2254 Polk Street (at Green St.) 415/674-8993  
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# Five things to know to make your first offer

by carole isaacs

AS WE MOVE TOWARD spring and the busiest real estate season, it is a good time to awake from your winter slumber and begin making a game plan to buy a home in 2014.

Location, price, condition, contingencies, loan preapproval, mortgage payments, and moving: Ahhhhh, the mind reels. Oops, I forgot to mention work. How do you fit all of the pieces together and find time to search for a home and make a winning offer?

The key word here is "pieces." Between books written about buying a home and articles online, there is little left to the imagination. The questions are: What's important, what's not, and what do you really need to know to buy a home? In the beginning most buyers find themselves in a state of information overload.

Buyers find that if they break the process into pieces, the whole project of buying a home becomes manageable.

Unless you are one of the lucky cash buyers, the first piece in your plan must be talking to a lender and completing your loan application for loan pre-approval. No matter how organized you are with your finances, it is not possible to make a realistic plan to buy a home until you know how much money you can borrow

comes on the market. Finding a home and writing an offer with little time to collect your thoughts, figure out an offer price and how to handle contingencies can be a stressful time for buyers.

Understanding what you need to know to make an offer is often left to the last minute. Here are five things you need to know that will help you get ready to make your first offer.

- Make sure your down payment is available and can easily be transferred to escrow. Expect sellers to ask for verification that your deposit is immediately available.

- Ask your lender how many days it will take to complete your appraisal and fully approve your loan with no conditions. Some lenders can close escrow in as little as 21 days, and 25 days is not unusual.

- Ask your agent how many days it will take to have a contractor and pest inspection. It is not unusu-

**Today the market moves quickly. It can be stressful for buyers.**

and the amount of your monthly payments.

Once your loan pre-approval is in place, the search for your home can begin. Today the market moves quickly, and it is not unusual for a seller to accept offers 10 days or less after their home



The prices have gone up a bit since these homes were built PHOTO: TELSTAR LOGISTICS / FLICKR

al for a serious buyers to have inspections completed before they make an offer. Sellers prefer offers that do not include inspection contingencies.

- Remember that in real estate, time is of the essence. Anything that can be done more quickly will make your offer more desirable to sellers.

- Have your agent find out as much as possible about the seller's needs, and do your best to accommodate the seller. Some sellers want a short escrow, others a high offer price, and others may want to rent back for a month after escrow closes — and some sellers want it all.

Just remember that the more information you have in advance, the whole process of buying a home will be less stressful and your chance of success higher.

Carole Isaacs is a Realtor with McGuire Real Estate. Visit her online at [www.caroleisaacs.com](http://www.caroleisaacs.com) or call 415-608-1267.



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# The Marina Times Real Estate Market Report: January 2014

By Hill & Co.

## SINGLE FAMILY HOME SALES

NEIGHBORHOOD	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS/BATHROOMS	SALE PRICE	ABOVE/AT/BELOW ASKING PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Cow Hollow	1966-1968 Greenwich Street	5BD/4BA	\$2,650,000	Below	99
Lake	107 24th Avenue	4BD/5BA	\$5,500,000	Below	96
Laurel Heights (no sales)					
Lone Mountain	2877 Turk Street	3BD/3.5BA	\$1,690,000	Above	31
	374 Ewing Terrace	2BD/1.5BA	\$1,296,000	Above	8
Marina	2920 Franklin Street	3BD/3BA	\$1,588,000	Above	15
Nob Hill (no sales)					
North Beach (no sales)					
Pacific Heights	3026 Clay Street	4BD/2.5BA	\$3,320,000	Above	9
	2833 Vallejo Street	4BD/3BA	\$4,350,000	Below	0
Presidio Heights	3460 Clay Street	6BD/4.5BA	\$7,500,000	Below	0
Russian Hill	1154 Chestnut Street	6BD/5BA	\$4,400,000	At	0
Sea Cliff (no sales)					
Telegraph Hill (no sales)					

## CONDOS

NEIGHBORHOOD	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS/BATHROOMS	SALE PRICE	ABOVE/AT/BELOW ASKING PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Cow Hollow	2374 Union Street	3BD/2BA	\$1,600,000	Above	21
	1968 Greenwich Street	3BD/2.5BA	\$1,050,000	Below	102
	2794 Filbert Street	2BD/2BA	\$1,622,500	Above	0
Lake (no sales)					
Laurel Heights	58 Palm Avenue	3BD/2.5BA	\$1,500,000	Above	103
Lone Mountain (no sales)					
Marina	3825 Scott Street #204	1BD/1BA	\$600,000	Above	9
	1500 Francisco Street #7	1BD/1BA	\$855,000	Below	94
	42 Toledo Way	2BD/1.5BA	\$1,275,000	Above	23
	3224 Octavia Street	3BD/2BA	\$1,695,000	At	14
	3226 Octavia Street	3BD/2BA	\$1,695,000	Above	14
Nob Hill	840 Powell Street #103	4BD/2.5BA	\$2,500,000	Below	68
	1177 California Street #315	1BD/1BA	\$675,000	Above	5
	1083 Clay Street #403	1BD/1BA	\$900,000	Above	21
	1100 Sacramento Street #1101	1BD/1BA	\$1,595,000	At	1
	850 Powell Street #901	3BD/2.5BA	\$1,650,000	Below	188
	1100 Sacramento Street #404	2BD/2.5BA	\$1,995,000	At	71
	1100 Sacramento Street #202	3BD/3.5BA	\$2,565,000	At	4
	1100 Sacramento Street #1008	4BD/3BA	\$6,995,000	At	52
North Beach (no sales)					
Pacific Heights	1626 Vallejo Street #2	1BD/1BA	\$560,000	Below	320
	2134 Green Street #3	2BD/1BA	\$999,000	At	64
	2774 Jackson Street	2BD/2BA	\$1,320,000	Below	45
	1901 California Street #5	3BD/2BA	\$1,355,000	At	166
	2100 Green Street #204	2BD/2BA	\$1,490,000	Below	75
	2100 Green Street #504	2BD/2BA	\$1,665,000	At	0
	2170 Jackson Street #1	3BD/3.5BA	\$2,380,000	Below	138
	1911A Vallejo Street	3BD/3.5BA	\$2,895,000	At	33
	1958 Vallejo Street #11	4BD/4.5BA	\$6,000,000	Below	54
Presidio Heights	112 Arguello Boulevard #1	1BD/1BA	\$475,000	Below	76
	3657 Clay Street	2BD/2BA	\$780,000	Below	101
Russian Hill	2130 Leavenworth Street #2	1BD/1BA	\$444,000	Below	55
	2 Fallon Place #6	1BD/1BA	\$805,000	Above	19
	1725 Jones Street #1	2BD/2BA	\$1,300,000	Above	76
	1259 Union Street	3BD/2BA	\$1,350,000	Above	55
	2701 Larkin Street #100	1BD/1.5BA	\$1,375,000	At	0
	1750 Taylor Street #805	3BD/3BA	\$4,600,000	Below	110
Sea Cliff (no sales)					
Telegraph Hill	455 Vallejo Street #102	1BD/1BA	\$765,000	Above	38
	383 Lombard Street #305	2BD/2BA	\$1,028,000	Above	0
	30 Prescott Court	3BD/2BA	\$1,725,000	Below	104

The data presented in this report is based on the San Francisco Multiple Listing Service and is accurate to the best of our knowledge, but cannot be guaranteed as such. For additional information, contact Hill & Co., 1880 Lombard Street (at Buchanan), 415-321-4362, www.hill-co.com.

## MYSTERY HOUSEBUYER :: Stress of not knowing



A recent rally at City Hall opposing the surge in evictions PHOTO: STEVEN RHODES / FLICKR

# Anticipating an unwanted move

## What renters and landlords should think about

by john zipperer

**H**ARLAN IS GOING TO BE MOVING at some point; he doesn't know when or where, but he's not stupid — he can read the writing on the wall.

Harlan, of course, is not his real name, but he is a real person. He has lived in a nice apartment with a bay view for a couple decades and would happily remain there if he could. But, like many people in booming San Francisco, he has noticed house after house in his neighborhood get sold for astronomical prices and then remodeled at even higher astronomical cost. Homes on either side of his small apartment building have been purchased, torn nearly completely down, and rebuilt. His own building has not been sold.

Yet. As I already noted, he can see the writing on the wall. Other tenants in his building who have moved out have not been replaced; any more of this, and he'll feel like Sebastian in *Blade Runner*, all alone in his apartment building.

What the situation looks like is that the owner is planning to dispose of his or her asset — the building — and it will be purchased by someone who will either continue to run it as a rental investment property or who will try to convert it into for-sale condominium units. The former is a possibility, but Harlan expects the latter, which is more likely.

There's no way to get around the hyperbolic political posturing when it comes to renting and owning in San Francisco. Activists opposed to rentals turning into ownership units refer to landlords who seek to do that as "speculators," which has about as much truth in it as the Bolsheviks calling opposition peasants "kulaks." (Speculators were once again cited in reports that city leaders were proposing legal changes that would effectively eliminate Ellis Act evictions.) Calling people names is a way in this political environment to make the owners look like criminals. But it is not a logical approach to assume that a rental unit must always remain a rental unit, unless that unit is a publicly owned unit; otherwise, one small section of San Franciscans — landlords, big and small — is being forced to bear all of the burden of meeting a generally approved public good of having accessibly priced rentals within city limits.

Demonization and rent-advocate protests are cathartic, but they don't actually take care of the problem. A large influx of new rental and for-sale housing will take care of some of the pressure to convert existing rental units, but unless the mayor's affordable housing initiative is a huge success, it won't help the renters who are low-income or in many cases just moderate-income. So that's a political look, but where does that leave Harlan?

According to the San Francisco Tenants Union ([www.sftu.org](http://www.sftu.org)), the per-tenant pay-

ment for an Ellis Act-qualified forced relocation is more than \$5,000, up to a maximum of more than \$15,000, with an additional \$3,000 or so for disabled or senior (at least 62 years of age) residents. Seniors and disabled residents furthermore must get a one-year advance notice of eviction; all other renters get 120 days.

There is a movement in San Francisco City Hall to give current tenants first right of refusal to purchase their rental units that are slated to be sold. The units would be market priced. That sounds like a logical move, though what owner wouldn't have gone with that option in the first place even without the proposed law? It would be faster and would obviate the need for relocation payment.

Another proposal would force landlords to pay for any increased rent their evicted tenant has to pay for a similar apartment for two years. (The evicted tenant could either choose this option or take the relocation fee noted above.) As an added punishment to the kulaks, it might be a popular move, but it does nothing to solve the supply-and-demand problem.

And all this focus on Ellis Act evictions is a marketing strategy, not a solution.

Writing in *San Francisco* magazine, Scott Lucas notes:

Ellis Act evictions represent only a small proportion of the city's total evictions — and they're not even historically high to begin with. In the 12-month period ending on February 28, 2013, the total number of Ellis Act evictions was 116 — an almost twofold increase over the previous year, but a nearly 70 percent decrease since 2000, when such evictions hit an all-time high of 384. All told, the Ellis Act was behind less than 7 percent of the 1,716 total evictions in the city between February 2012 and February 2013. "Isn't it far more likely," asks Karen Chapple, a professor of city planning at UC Berkeley, "that more units are being lost [from the market] through Airbnb?"

That could unite people: blame it on the mobile tech revolution. But again, what about Harlan? He is not a low-income tenant, and I'm too polite to inquire whether he's 62 yet (though let's just say he must be close enough that I have to be too polite not to inquire), so he's not going to be championed by the tenant activists.

The problem remains that there is a shortage of inventory, and that puts the landlords in the driver's seat and makes Harlan and other renters supplicants of a sort. If anything, more kulaks are needed with more rental units at all price points; but if they're the bad guys, don't expect City Hall to do anything to breed more of them.

*The Mystery Housebuyer isn't anonymous, but the people he writes about are. E-mail: [john@marinatimes.com](mailto:john@marinatimes.com)*





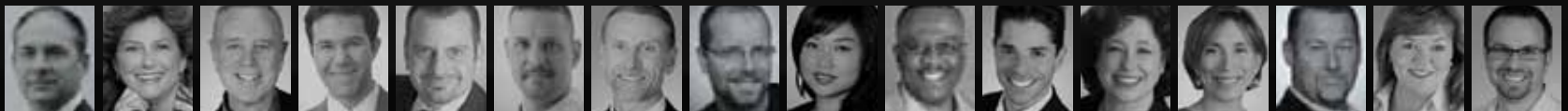
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# The changing of the guard

by john zipperer

**W**HAT WILL SAN FRANCISCO look like in 10 years? City planning officials spend a great deal of time and expertise trying to get a grip on that, local politicians spend a great deal of time trying to look like they're shaping it, and the average person spends almost no time thinking about it. Change is inevitable, even in a city with NIMBY forces on steroids, so it is worth spending even a short time pondering the ways in which our city is going to look different in the near future.

Many things will change. As you read last month in Supervisor Mark Farrell's *Marina Times* column, long-neglected Lombard Street is becoming a focus of revitalization; news of one improvement was not long in coming. The Lombard Business Merchants Association shared with us the news that a mixed-use building with 21 housing units and 2,700-square-feet of commercial space was just approved by the city for a spot between Scott and Pierce on Lombard.

Expect more of that on Lombard. But construction, new neighbors, new shops, and revitalized parks will continue to alter the face of the city's many streets. By January 2015, KB Home plans to complete an 81-unit condo development at 2655 Bush Street in Lower Pacific Heights, according to *San Francisco Business Times* reporter Blanca Torres. Google is taking up new digs on Alabama Street in the Mission (so, yes, employees can walk or skateboard to work rather than take buses or ferries

or flying carpets or whatever the kids are riding these days). Online storage services firm Dropbox is expanding, leasing an entire building a stone's throw from AT&T Park. Anyone driving toward Castro on Market Street sees new residential and commercial buildings on numerous street corners. And meanwhile the major redo of the Van Ness corridor as part of the Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project continues to move forward, with the Federal Transit Administration issuing a determination that it meets National Environmental Policy Act requirements. Full speed ahead. Van Ness, like Polk alongside it, will not look or feel the same in a decade.

San Francisco is going through a cultural and generational change as much as it is going through an economic one. In the 1970s, the old guard was angry at the baby boomers of the new liberal vanguard who were trying to drag the city into the late 20th century. Many of that new generation would surely recoil at being called conservatives, but the people who fought those political battles in support of a new city largely won their battles and naturally became the new old guard, for today they are the ones who are in many cases resistant to the changes in their city. People whose politics were shaped by the 1960s and 1970s in turn shaped the city's politics and policies for the next few decades, and many of them have lived their lives here, started businesses, found love, poured their energies into getting that local playground built or setting the tone for a tolerant neighborhood, and they have in many

cases been in homes that have appreciated in value fantastically since the 1990s, 1980s, or even the 1970s.

They are justifiably proud of the city they shaped. It is a city rich in politically engaged people, thriving businesses (including world-class restaurants and world-beating tech companies), intellectual curiosity, tolerance of people who are outside the society's mainstream, and a beautiful parks system.

They are also optimistic. Fifty percent of the city's residents believe San Francisco is headed in the right direction, and 38 percent of them believe the city's parks are getting even better, according to a new Dignity Health CityBeat Poll of San Francisco voters. That might sound like a side issue in an era of complaining about shared rides for Google and Apple employees, but it's not. "San Francisco needs to retain more families and ensure a diverse workforce if we are to sustain a vibrant economy for years to come," said Bob Linscheid, president & CEO of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. "Clean and safe parks are one factor helping to attract families and improve the quality of life for all those who live in our city."

That same poll found that 34 percent of San Franciscans listed the "cost of owning a home" as the major issue facing the city, closely followed by homelessness and problems associated with it, and in third place was "cost of rents/affordability."

The heated debate continues over to what degree rising housing costs are due to new tech workers flooding into the city or due

to the old guard resisting the building of enough new housing to keep people of all income levels happily and affordably housed. That won't be solved anytime soon, and resisting the influx of well-paid and talented tech workers from helping to create the city of tomorrow isn't going to keep the city like it is today — no more than old-time families who tried to keep the baby boomers from altering their beloved city succeeded. Change continues to happen, and besides, babies do get born; perhaps unexpectedly, WhatToExpect.com actually lists San Francisco as the number-one city in the country for having a baby. Yes, the city with more dogs than children is number one. Apparently, we rank very high for prenatal support, a pregnancy-friendly environment (whatever that means), and health care for new mothers and babies. The survey figured that such things as air pollution and proximity to Superfund hazardous waste sites were negatives (San Francisco ranked low in those categories) and walkability, the number of baby-supply stores, YMCAs, and farmers markets were positives (and we ranked high in those).

Build a great city and people want to live in it. And when they do, they'll build the next level of a great city.

*John Zipperer is a former senior editor at Affordable Housing Finance and Apartment Finance Today magazines, as well as a former editor at the CCIM Institute. E-mail: john@marinatimes.com*

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# Buying or selling real estate

## Why do you need a real estate agent?

bystephaniesaunderahlberg

**I** GET THIS QUESTION FROM time to time: “Why do we need a real estate agent?” The answer, put simply, is that transactions and compliance with regulations are becoming more and more complicated. Real estate agents are trained on the latest requirements for the sale and purchase of property.

Still, this is the information age. Can't you find everything you need on the Internet? My answer is this: Would it be too much to liken real estate to medicine? You can find a lot of good information on WebMD, but when you need surgery, you're probably going to want a doctor.

Consider this: Years ago I got a call from a client who had previously purchased a “for sale by owner” home directly. It was now time for the couple to resell. I asked them for certain documents that they should have been given when they purchased. They pulled out their file, and none of the items I asked for were there. Sellers are required to give

these documents to buyers by law, and if my sellers didn't have them, then they would have to pay to have these documents recreated, and pay for any inspections or activities required to complete the documents.

I have never forgotten that. Real estate agents keep up on our ever-changing federal, state and local requirements to ensure that all documents, disclosures and inspections are in compliance with current regulations.

Sometimes I am asked about simply having an attorney handle all this paperwork. That sounds like a reasonable alternative, but real estate transactions are more involved than that. For example, I have never seen attorneys attend physical inspections of the property. Even if they did, it is not something they do routinely like professional real estate agents do. We attend the property inspections so we can listen with our buyers and ask key questions that a buyer may not think to ask. Should something come up, we keep lists of professionals — such as electricians, plumbers, contractors, engineers, and the like

— who can share their expertise and offer assistance if necessary.

Real estate agents also have lenders available whom they know and trust. These lenders will give our clients preferred service. They will present loan options that match up with a client's circumstances and preferences, and they can preapprove that client. In today's market, that is critical. All parties need to know that the lender is reliable and that the buyer will be able to perform. Just picking a mortgage broker or banker on your own is not the best way to ensure that your offer will be seen favorably. Listing agents want to be familiar with the lender on the preapproval letter to ensure the smoothest possible transaction for their seller.

Your real estate agent will advise you on how to craft the best offer possible in today's super-hot market. He or she can not only look at comparable sales but can advise buyers on what it might take to present a competitive offer package. The real estate agent will make sure that all required items are in the package — not just the offer itself.



Agents make the process understandable PHOTO: DENSI12 / FLICKR

My final point for today: Most real estate agents are connected to other real estate agents who might have a property that you are looking for. We make phone calls to see what we can find out in advance of properties coming on the market. We network with other agents to let them know what our buyers are looking for, in case they know of listings that might match up with what is being sought.

These are just a very few of the many reasons to use a

professional real estate agent when buying or selling a home. This may well be the largest single transaction of your life; use a professional to be sure all the “I”s are dotted and the “T”s crossed.

*Stephanie Saunders Ahlberg has been a real estate agent for more than 30 years and joined Hill & Co. in 1983, where she has consistently been among the top 10 salespeople. She can be reached at [www.realtyinsanfrancisco.com](http://www.realtyinsanfrancisco.com).*

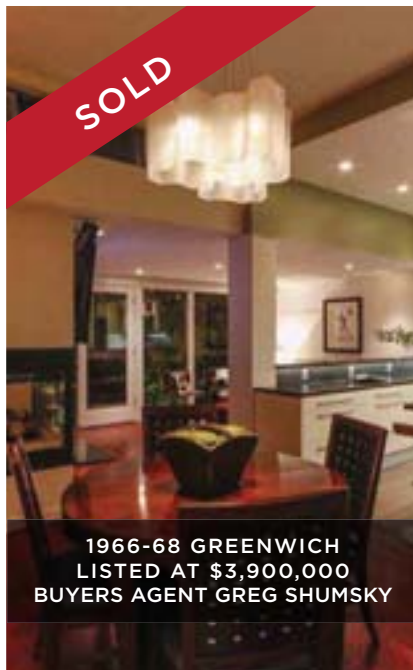
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# Why good digestion is good for you

by thalia farshchian

**T**HE OLD SAYING, “you are what you eat,” is true, but it is arguable that you are actually what you absorb. Eating a healthful diet is imperative to disease prevention, but how we eat our healthful diet is equally important. For example, the person who eats plenty of calcium-rich foods, but has poor absorption is still largely at risk for osteoporosis.

## HOW STRESS AND AGING IMPACT DIGESTION

Physiologically, stress shunts blood away from the digestive tract to muscles to support a fight-or-flight response. Historically, stress was short-lived, and the fight-or-flight response was balanced with the rest-and-digest response. We

have not yet evolved to take on the amount of stress our Western lifestyles surmount upon us, so we need to be cognizant of our limitations. When we eat under stressful conditions, our bodies do not release the digestive juices like stomach acid and pancreatic enzymes required for breaking down food into nutrition.

As we age, our stomach acid and pancreatic enzymes decline naturally. Chronic stress and aging effects on digestion include gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), heartburn, constipation, diarrhea, abdominal bloating, gas, malnutrition, and susceptibility to infections like *Helicobacter pylori*, parasites and more.

## SUPPORTING HEALTHY DIGESTION

**Start cooking.** Digestion truly begins when we first step foot in the kitchen to prepare our food. **The tasty aroma of our food stimulates our sense of smell, and signals the brain to prepare the body to release digestive juices.** We have all experienced this response when we start salivating at the thought, sight, or smell of food.

**Relax and enjoy.** Eating in a relaxed state is incredibly important to our food digestion and nutrient absorption. Whether alone or with friends and

family, remove all possible stimuli including your television and cell phone. **Take a few deep breaths, making your exhale twice as long as your inhale.** When we inhale, we stimulate the sympathetic nervous system correlated with the fight-or-flight response. When we exhale, we stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system correlated to the rest-in-digest response. By focusing on the exhale, we can prep our bodies to prepare to eat. Laughing and pleasant conversation improves the eating experience and reduces stress levels, so eat with the people you most enjoy in your life.

**acid levels.** Some individuals’ stomach acid or pancreatic enzymes are so low that further support is necessary using hydrochloric acid or digestive enzymes.

## NUTRIENTS AND HERBS TO SUPPORT DIGESTION

**Water and salt.** Chronic dehydration can also lead to low stomach acid. Biochemically, water donates hydrogen molecules to help make stomach acid, which is one hydrogen molecule and one chloride molecule. Chloride often comes from salt. In the United States, most people over consume salt, so this piece of the

requirement is pretty simple to meet. The best indicator for hydration level is urine color — the goal is to maintain a straw color throughout

## Laughing and pleasant conversation improves the eating experience and reduces stress.

**Chew your food.** Digestion begins in our mouths using salivary amylase and lipase for fat and carbohydrate breakdown. Eating rapidly causes us to skip an important first step. **The goal is to chew your food about 25 times per bite.** Slowing down our meals also helps us digest better by building stomach acid and digestive enzymes and allows our stomach to properly signal our brain when we have become full.

**Avoid water with meals.** My patients are often surprised when I tell them to avoid drinking water with their meals. The reasoning behind this suggestion is that the alkalinity of water dilutes stomach acid and delays digestion. The consistent dilution of stomach acid often leads to heartburn and GERD. Low stomach acid causes undigested food to sit in the stomach and create pressure that produces heartburn symptoms. Those complaining of heartburn or who have been diagnosed with GERD have too little stomach acid, not too much. Long-term antacid use inhibits nutrient absorption and predisposes people to conditions like osteoporosis and anemia. **Drink one tablespoon of lemon juice or apple cider vinegar in an ounce of water to aid healthy stomach**

most of the day. For those who take supplements, this may be more difficult to gauge, so half your body weight in ounces is another guideline.

**Bitters.** The same ingredients found in many cocktails can also be used to help prime your body for a meal. Aromatic bitters contain an herb called gentian, which has been shown to support healthy hydrochloric acid and pancreatic enzymes. These bitters can be mixed with carbonated water and lemon to sip throughout a meal for those who have difficulty not drinking anything with food.

**Spearmint.** Spearmint tea is a great addition to the natural medicine cabinet and to a daily routine. This herb supports digestion by eliciting relaxation, soothing the stomach, and reducing spasms that can be associated with reflux. If spearmint is difficult to find, peppermint is a close relative and can also be helpful.

*Thalia Farshchian is a naturopathic doctor at Discover Health. Her background includes both conventional and alternative modalities, and her practice is primarily focused on weight management, hormone imbalances and gastrointestinal conditions. E-mail: drthalia@discoverhealthmd.com*



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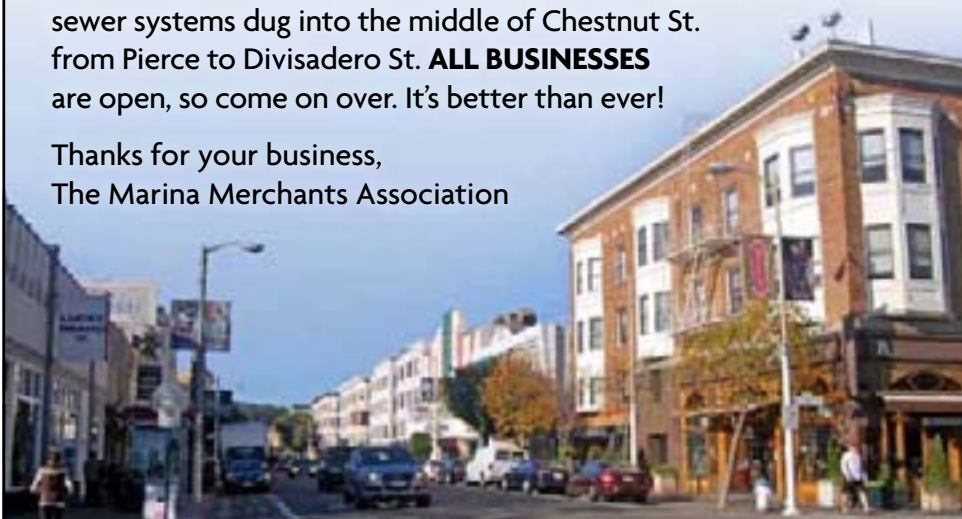
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A spa for your stroller? Jamie Mamikunian's dining-room idea is now a flourishing local business

## 'Mom-preneurs'

### Jamie Mamikunian, owner, Stroller Spa

by liz farrell

**I**N THE LAST FEW YEARS, THERE HAS been an emergence of mom entrepreneurs, or "mom-preneurs." There is even a group called S.F. Mom Entrepreneurs that meets regularly to support moms who want help launching their small business idea. For the next few months, I am going to mix it up a bit and profile some local moms who have started their own businesses while juggling the demands of motherhood.

Jamie Mamikunian is the founder of Stroller Spa, which began in her dining room nearly eight years ago and recently opened a storefront on Sacramento Street. The mother of three young children, her idea for this business came during a playgroup with her daughter. At first, Mamikunian thought it would be fun to personalize strollers, and from there, she decided there was more of a need/desire from parents for someone to clean and repair strollers. "Most of the high-end strollers can cost anywhere from \$800-\$1,000, so it is a big investment that you want to last, and to do that you have to take care of [them]," she says.

The business started with cleaning and detailing strollers and car seats but quickly moved to include brake repairs and tune ups. Today, Stroller Spa's expanded services also include functioning as a certified installation center for car seats, which comes with a tutorial and a lifetime safety inspection. It also offers rentals of gently used strollers and consignment sales; soon, it will begin selling select car seats.

#### CHALLENGES OF RUNNING A BUSINESS

Mamikunian's biggest challenge, besides having to move her car on Sacramento Street every two hours, is finding a balance between providing great customer service and spending time with her family — something familiar to many working moms. On the day she was due with her third child, for example, Mamikunian spent the day cleaning and repairing a double stroller for a very insistent parent. Shortly after returning the fully detailed stroller to the owner, she went to the hospital and delivered her baby.

When she was running her business from home, strollers and car seats were everywhere: After a full day as a mom, she would then repair and detail strollers until the early morning hours. The store has helped that considerably, with business hours that allow Mamikunian time for her husband and children in the evenings and on weekends.

Mamikunian has had many challenges

along the way. Lacking an MBA, she has had to learn a lot about running a business. She persistently contacted a stroller manufacturer for over two years before it finally agreed to make her business the first authorized repair center in the United States.

Currently, Mamikunian has relationships with almost all major stroller and car seat manufacturers. Stroller Spa has 23 franchise locations across the United States and Canada, and the majority of owners are moms who like the flexibility and the ability to work from home. "The look on a skeptical dad's face when he sees his stroller good-as-new is what makes it all worth it," she says. "I want my children to understand the value of hard work and that money doesn't grow on trees." One way she does this is to make the business a family affair; you may find her youngest playing in the children's area or her husband detailing a stroller. She even developed a mini detail kit for her kids and the kids of the other owners so they can help and feel a part of the work.

#### COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Her advice for other moms thinking of starting their own business: Just do it! "Moms have so many great ideas that come to them while breastfeeding or watching their child play; they are thinking constantly." Tackling fear and taking the risk are the hardest parts and prove to be the biggest hurdles for many. "Seek out help and don't be afraid to ask for help," she says, and "having a strong network of support is key and is what keeps me going."

The idea of support and community is definitely not lost on Mamikunian. She firmly believes in giving back to her community. One of the best programs at Stroller Spa is the relationship with the local nonprofit Homeless Prenatal Project. Mamikunian will pick up, hand wash, steam, and sanitize most baby gear and donate it in your name to the organization.

To anyone who is not a parent, this idea may sound a little crazy — a spa for your stroller? But for those of us who have had a child get sick in a car seat or don't have the time to clean out the years of Goldfish and Cheerios hidden beneath, this is a dream come true. It is also a dream come true for Jamie Mamikunian, who with a lot of hard work and support from her family has a thriving local business.

**Stroller Spa:** 3566 Sacramento Street, 415-346-8449, [www.strollerspa.com](http://www.strollerspa.com), Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

E-mail: [liz@marinatimes.com](mailto:liz@marinatimes.com)

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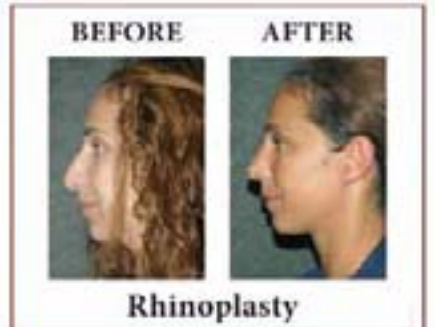
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YAPPING WITH :: Animal heroes

## Janet Song California Pit Bull Rescue

by susan dyer reynolds

### How did you get involved with rescue and how long have you been doing it?

I accidentally became a pit bull guardian and realized that all of the myths I had believed were untrue. I found them to be the dogs most in need of help and one thing led to another. I've been involved for 10 years.

### What are the upcoming events for California Pit Bull Rescue?

We have an adoption event at Pet Food Express, 280 Northgate One (next to Safeway) in San Rafael on Saturday, March 22 from noon to 3 p.m.

### Tell us about your organization.

California Pit Bull Rescue's (CPR) mission is saving at-risk pit bull-type dogs and facilitating social change to abolish the abuse, overbreeding and mis-

education surrounding the breed. CPR has a statewide fostering network, fundraising programs, educational initiatives, and financial/physical support for in-need guardians of pit bull-type dogs. We are also working to establish a sanctuary for pit bulls and pit bull mixes, which will ease local municipal shelter burdens and provide community support for responsible dog guardianship.

Established in August 2012, CPR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit rescue organization with headquarters in Oakland, Calif. One hundred percent of our donations go toward our mission goals including awareness initiatives and providing food, supplies, housing, training, and medical care for the dogs we take into our rescue program. We strive to house our dogs in foster homes where they can decompress and



Left to right: Pumpkin, who was beaten as a puppy, blossomed under CPR's care; Pumpkin with her adopted "sister" Sinnamon and loving guardians John and Melissa

PHOTO: COURTESY JANET SONG



learn how to be loved and secure family members. They remain under CPR's wing until we find them the perfect forever home.

### What is the biggest challenge facing your rescue right now?

We need more foster homes and funds to purchase a ranch-style facility as a base of operations. We are also looking for help with developing an integrated revenue stream that will enable key staff to devote full-

time hours to rescue. Currently we are 100 percent volunteer.

### What are some of the major misconceptions about pit bulls?

They are somehow so genetically "different" from all other canines; that they are born "dangerous." All dog breeds can bite and all dog breeds can be dangerous, but pit bulls are the breed most likely to end up with irresponsible owners who abuse and neglect them. Even after being mistreated, though, they

are amazingly resilient, still trusting of humans, and eager to love and be loved. If you put them in the same loving, responsible homes that golden retrievers and Labrador retrievers get, they will thrive.

### What is the age range of the dogs at your rescue?

Newborn puppies to about 6 years old right now. We get different ages all the time.

YAPPING, continued on 32

## PIT OF THE MONTH



Friendly, goofy, loving and beautiful, Angel needs an angel

## Adopt an angel

by susan dyer reynolds

ANGEL'S NAME SAYS IT ALL — SHE'S TRULY A SWEET-heart of a dog. She is 1 year, 7 months old, a mix of Staffordshire terrier and possibly border collie (which would make a lot of sense based on her looks, her love of learning, and her prowess at playing fetch). Angel is friendly, active, goofy, loving, affectionate, and beautiful to boot. She is a favorite of the staff and volunteers at San Francisco Animal Care and Control. Through no fault of her own, Angel came to the shelter because her owner was no longer able to provide her a home or proper care. Because of that she has some hair loss, but now that she's being treated with medication, her coat is improving rapidly. Angel's new person or family should be willing to continue treatment and follow-up visits with a vet.

A generous donor has sponsored Angel's adoption fee and training classes. San Francisco Animal Care and Control (where the *Marina Times*' Skylar Grey comes from), is overflowing with pittie mixes right now, so they hope you will come down for a meet and greet and consider giving the pitties the chance they deserve. If you can't adopt, please considering sponsoring a pittie until it is able to find a forever home.

Some of the most deserving and adoptable dogs at shelters are pittie mixes, and they are often overlooked, so they linger at the shelter longer than other breeds. Many pitties actually make great apartment dogs because they're quiet, adapt easily to their surroundings, eagerly respond to direction and are just as happy on a long walk at Crissy Field as they are in couch-potato mode.

For more information on adopting Angel, visit [www.animalshelter.sfgov.org](http://www.animalshelter.sfgov.org), call 415-554-6364, or email [ACC@sfgov.org](mailto:ACC@sfgov.org) — her shelter ID is A331304. If you'd like to visit Angel in person, you'll find her at the shelter's adoption center located at 1200 15th Street.

## CATHOUSE :: It's not me, it's you

# Your cat questions answered

by john zipperer

**T**HIS MONTH, IN RESPONSE to numerous requests, we answer your cat behavioral questions. Luckily for cat owners, the answer is usually the same.

**Dear Cathouse:** My cat, Fooshes, likes to bite my hand when I reach down to give her dinner. How can I make her stop?

— *Bitten in Bernal Heights*

**Dear Bitten:** Introducing a cat into your household is akin to making a long-term commitment to reciting The Serenity Prayer every day, in particular the part about asking God to "grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change." Wear oven mitts at feeding time. She's a cat. There's nothing you can do.

**Dear Cathouse:** I love my 10-year-old tabby, Goofball, so much. But he sprays. Help! I don't want to cover my lovely new carpets and furniture in plastic sheeting!

— *Mopping Up in the Marina*

**Dear Mopping:** Buy as much plastic as if you were attending a Gallagher concert. He's a cat. There's nothing you can do.

**Dear Cathouse:** My two cats no longer sleep on my bed at night; instead, they spend their nocturnal hours in the living room or on the floor of my bedroom. I know it sounds silly, but I miss falling asleep to their contented purring. How can I get them back on the bed? When I pick them up and put them next to my pillow, they just jump off and run away.

— *Sleepless in Sea Cliff*

**Dear Sleepless:** They're cats. There's nothing you can do.

**Dear Cathouse:** Ten years ago, after my marriage fell apart, and I lost my job because the company's owner embezzled all of the profits, I moved from Atlanta to San Francisco. It was difficult finding a home here, even in those less-crazy times. But after renting a studio above a bodega for three months, I finally was able to make an offer on a slightly worn but still beautiful Victorian in Cow Hollow. It was much larger than I actually needed — my ex got all three kids and I lost all of my furniture paying off legal bills defending myself against charges related to my boss's embezzlement. Long story.

Anyway, I spent that first year fixing up the

place. Paint. New railing. I discovered an original stained-glass window in the basement and returned it to its rightful place in the stairwell. I bought some wonderful period furniture that was made when my home was built. And when I had it all set up, I knew the only thing missing was some furry friends to share it with. So I got a dog and a cat. The dog is perfect. A little too perfect; she follows me around and obeys me like a North Korean stadium crowd. But she's a dog, so that's OK.

The cat, Hades, is another story. She is all nice and friendly for most of the day, but if her food isn't put in her plate at exactly

the right times, she howls and jumps at my hands and knocks things off the mantel. She won't let me clip her nails, so she scratches my 80-year-old antique furniture. She even managed to break my stained-glass window when she leaped onto the windowsill because she spotted a bird outside. Maybe I should have used better sealant. Whatever.

The cat is driving me crazy. Is there a cat military school I can send her to?

— *Crazy in Cow Hollow*

**Dear Crazy:** She's a cat. There's nothing you can do.

And there you go, dear readers! Good luck!

E-mail: [john@marinatimes.com](mailto:john@marinatimes.com)



It's a cat: there's nothing you can do PHOTOS: OCEAN YAMAHA / FLICKR





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**MEWS BRIEFS** : Frankenmutts, walking dead, and throwaway dogs

by susan dyer reynolds

**LABRADOODLE INVENTOR REGRETS CREATING FRANKENMUTT CRAZE**

While working as the puppy-breeding manager at the Royal Guide Dog Association of Australia during the late 1980s, Wally Conron needed to come up with a solution for a woman in Hawaii with vision problems and a husband who was allergic to fur. After 33 failed attempts in three years, Conron's experiments led to crossing his top-of-the-line Labrador retriever with an equally stellar standard poodle, and while the designer mutt fit the bill of having less allergenic "hair" rather than fur, no one was interested. "I was very, very careful of what I used, but nobody wanted Labrador crosses. I had a three-to-six-month waiting list, but everyone wanted purebreds," the 85-year-old Conron told the Associated Press in an interview last month. "So I had to come up with a gimmick." That gimmick was to call the mutt a Labradoodle, and Conron says it worked like a charm: "We told people we had a new dog and all of sudden, people wanted this wonder dog."

Today, Labradoodles are the designer mutt du jour, spawning dozens of other concoctions, from puggles to Maltipoos, in their wake. Conron said creating the Labradoodle was like creating

a doggy version of "Frankenstein" and he is filled with regret, not only for unleashing his version of "Frankenmutt," but also for triggering the entire designer "hybrid" craze.

Conron pointed out that the majority of Labradoodles, like most designer dogs, come from "horrific" puppy mills that are out to make a quick buck. "Instead of breeding out the problems, they're breeding them in. For every perfect one, you're going to find a lot of crazy ones," he said. "They're selling them for more than a purebred is worth, and they're not going into the backgrounds of the parents of the dogs. There are so many poodle crosses having fits, problems with their eyes, hips, and elbows; a lot have epilepsy. There are a few ethical breeders but very, very few."

Further, Conron says the dogs are being sold under false pretenses. "When the pups were five months old, we sent clippings and saliva to Hawaii to be tested with this woman's husband. Of the three pups, he was not allergic to one of them. In the next litter I had, there were 10 pups, but only three had non-allergenic coats. Now, people are breeding these dogs and selling them as non-allergenic and they're not even testing them."

There's no doubt the "doodle" craze has spiraled out of control, with unscrupulous breeders mix-

ing all kinds of dogs together; for example, golden retrievers and miniature poodles. Worse, many are crossing doodles with other doodles: A "true" Labradoodle must be a purebred Lab crossed with a purebred standard poodle, which is unbeknownst to gullible, trend-following buyers. When you see what the original Labradoodles looked like compared to the wildly different looking doodles of today — miniature, medium, standard; hair coat, wool coat, fleece coat; chocolate, cream, apricot, red, parti — it becomes evident that those trend followers are getting a dog that Conron says is even more of a "Frankenmutt" than his original creation.

Conron has never owned a Labradoodle and stopped breeding them when he retired 20 years ago. "I've done a lot of damage," Conron said. "I've created a lot of problems ... Marvelous thing? My foot. There are a lot of unhealthy and abandoned dogs out there." And he still witnesses the effects of his work every day. "You can't walk down the street without seeing a poodle cross of some sort. Not in my wildest dream did I imagine all of this would happen."

**MEXICAN WALKING FISH NEAR EXTINCTION**

The axolotl, better known as the Mexican salamander or the Mexican walking fish, appears



Mexican walking fish may be walking dead

to have vanished from its only known natural habitat in Mexico City's Lake Xochimilco and Lake Chalco. Though millions of axolotl once made giant lakes their home, Luiz Zambrano (a biologist at Mexico's National Autonomous University) and his team of researchers were unable to find any creatures in either lake, both of which have experienced widespread pollution and urban sprawl.

**THROWAWAY DOGS NOT JUST ON TRASH CONVEYOR BELTS**

Over the last few months, two small pups made big news in the Bay Area and consequently received big interest from potential adopters. An injured Chihuahua mix puppy with dyed pink fur found in East Palo Alto and brought to the Peninsula Humane Society garnered hundreds of inquiries. Named Candy by the shelter, she easily found a new home. A poodle-mix puppy found wiggling in a trash bag on

a conveyor belt at the Recology transfer station in San Francisco received so much interest that San Francisco Animal Care and Control had to do a lottery. Gem, as the workers called her, went home with a Recology worker, who expressed her gratitude for being able to "keep Gem in the Recology family."

Though I am thrilled to see two deserving dogs find loving homes, throwaway dogs aren't just on trash conveyor belts or dyed pink in Palo Alto; there are thousands of deserving puppies and adult dogs waiting for homes in shelters throughout the Bay Area. Whenever a dog's story is so compelling that it's picked up by the media, hundreds of potential adopters wait in line before the shelter opens, as they did for Gem, or fill up the shelter's voicemail as they did for Candy, but I'd like to see them lining up and calling around the clock for all those throwaway dogs who don't make the news.

E-mail: [susan@marinatimes.com](mailto:susan@marinatimes.com)

**SKY'S BUYS**



Zoe, Ask the Meatman's official dog bone taste tester, enjoys a large smoked knucklebone  
PHOTO: COURTESY THE MEATMAN

**Ask the Meatman**  
Smoked beef bones, shanks and tendons

by susan dyer reynolds

**I**F YOUR DOG LOVES treats with a smoky flavor like Skylar does, it won't be able to resist these. Ask the Meatman owner Craig Meyer uses only bones, shanks, and tendons from beef raised in the United States for human consumption. Each piece is trimmed by hand then smoked in Meyer's own smokehouse in Jackson, Miss., with 100-percent natural hickory at 170 degrees for a minimum of eight hours (unlike cooked bones, smoked bones are safe for

dogs to chew). After smoking, the bones and tendons are flash frozen and shipped free via Priority Mail (they're loosely wrapped in freezer paper with ice packs).

Meyer calls his products "old fashioned-style butcher shop dog bones": small-batch, artisan, all-natural bones with no preservatives, chemicals, salt, or artificial flavors or coloring. There are five varieties in various sizes (extra large knucklebones, large knucklebones, puppy chews, shanks, and tendons), and there's a variety pack so your dog can try all five and find a favorite.

Skylar's top pick: the tendon chews (the "Achilles tendon" from the hind leg), which have a little extra meat on the bones and last for hours.

**Ask the Meatman:** Smoked beef tendon chews \$39.97 for six; variety pack (one of each) \$29.99; puppy/small dog chews \$29.97 for 20; free shipping; 573-837-7651, [www.askthemeatman.com](http://www.askthemeatman.com) or [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) (by using Amazon Smile, you can select a charity and Amazon will make a donation for every purchase).

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**YAPPING**

CONTINUED from page 30

**A dog I'd really like to see adopted is ...**

Tina! She is a gorgeous smoked chocolate Labrador retriever-pit mix with glowing golden eyes. Tina was pulled from the shelter with an old hip injury. She underwent FHO surgery sponsored partially by Maddie's Fund and has recovered beautifully in her loving foster home. She now romps and runs with her best friend, her foster sister, Ruby (a cocker spaniel). Tina can be a bit timid, more with men than women, but warms up nicely after she's met you once or twice. She absolutely adores the man in her foster home now. Tina is playful, affectionate, alert, and super sweet. She would do well with people who understand that her initial shyness will turn into unending kisses and cuddles — she bonds quite tightly to people she trusts.

**A dog who is a great success story is ...**

Pumpkin Pie — she was pulled from euthanasia in the Central Valley. From there, she was boarded in a doggie day care for months, and the warehouse-like environment sapped her vitality. She began to lose fur and was continuously fatigued. Pumpkin is a fearful dog, and we think she was beaten badly with objects as a puppy. She had an extreme fear of people

with anything in their hands coming toward her. Due to her fears, Pumpkin bounced through several foster homes before she finally found a place where she was comfortable. Even there, she hid under tables and covered if anyone approached her with so much as a comb to brush her. She lived there for nearly a year, learning to be patient with cats and enjoying the benefits



Pumpkin slowly recovered from her sad past and became a radiant, loving dog ready for a new life  
PHOTO: COURTESY JANET SONG

of a home life. During that time, Pumpkin lost several potential adopters due to her fearful nature until one woman, who had been following Pumpkin's story, decided that she and her husband would make this work. After two months of play dates and careful adherence to a behaviorist's instructions, this little orange dog was finally home.

She now lives happily and bravely with her beloved sister dog, Sinnamon, three cats and two rats. She just completed a family vacation in Carmel where she and Sinnamon went to the beach and ran like the wind on the shore!

**Where can people go online to find out more, see adoptable dogs, volunteer, foster, or donate?**

Visit [www.californiapitbullrescue.org](http://www.californiapitbullrescue.org) or contact us at [californiapitbullrescue@gmail.com](mailto:californiapitbullrescue@gmail.com).

E-mail: [susan@marinatimes.com](mailto:susan@marinatimes.com)



*"I love my pets so much I'll only give them Halo."*  
 —Ellen DeGeneres, Animal Advocate, co-owner, Halo

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# The five faces of Skylar Grey

by susan dyer reynolds

## SCAREDY SKY

She's come a long way, but Skylar can still be a scaredy dog — loud barking, aggressive Chihuahuas, and going to the vet are just a few things she fears. The first time the neighbor's dog barked at the back fence, Sky jumped a foot in the air, ran inside and leapt into my lap, shaking like a bowl of Jell-O.

Our inaugural trip to the big dog park was a disaster — the loud unison barking sent her to her belly as she tried to squirm back to the car. We had a rough start at the little dog park, too, as snarling pint-sized Chihuahuas chased her round and round, until she figured out she could roll on her back and let them climb all over her like Gulliver and the Lilliputians, which she liked quite a bit.

When I left her home alone for the first time, I could hear her plaintively wailing and I had to plug my ears; when I returned she peed on the floor and acted as if I'd left her for days (it was an hour).

After one trip to the vet, she made such a production of future visits that I had to buy a harness to lift her into the office, her feet flailing frantically as if she were running away in midair.

Upon hearing a loud noise in the basement one evening, she started barking at the top of the stairs. "Go ahead, Sky, see what that is," I said, standing beside her, but instead she went behind my legs, still barking while looking up at me as if to say, "No, you go ahead. I'll stay up here and keep watch."

## SCARY SKY

(not to be confused with Scardey Sky)

Cooped up after three days of rain, Scary Sky emerged, bouncing off the walls like Honey Boo Boo on a sugar high. I had to let her out to do her business, but she refused to come back in so I shut the door. A few minutes later I turned on the porch light to see her twirling across the lawn like the Tasmanian devil, her green eyes demonic, covered in mud — and I noticed there was a huge hole in the lawn that was rapidly becoming a lake. Fortunately, Skylar thinks the hose is a game so I was able to spray her off as she ran back and forth like a kid through a sprinkler. Just past midnight, after a good towel drying, she finally came in and passed out. Before I passed out, I said a little prayer: "Dear God, please let there be sunshine tomorrow."

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com

THOUGH SKYLAR CAN BE SHY, SHE has never been camera shy — which is a good thing because I take so many photos for this column. When it came time for her My Mutt poster, Pet Food Express sent photographer Mark Rogers to my house. Sky warmed up to Mark quickly, and he was amazed at what a little ham she was. Cocking her head on cue and staring into the lens with those hazel green eyes, she was the perfect little Starlet. Turns out, Starlet Sky is just one of the five faces of Skylar Grey.



Starlet Sky aces her My Mutt photo shoot  
PHOTO: MARK ROGERS / MARKROGERSPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

## SILLY SKY

Whether she's twirling joyously in the garden or chasing a pinecone up and down a hill of ice plant at Stow Lake, Sky has a silly side. Sometimes Silly Sky gets into mischief, like diving into Stow Lake for an impromptu swim (much to the chagrin of an elderly couple seated on a bench across the way).

## SWEET SKY

My favorite of the five faces — her ears pinned back, eyes as big as a Keane painting, cuddly, loving, and cute as a button. Sweet Sky especially likes our morning time, resting her head on the pillow next to mine, one paw on my chest, staring into my eyes. Then she scoots her way closer until she's able to wrap her arm around my neck and rest her head under my chin. As I stroke her gently, she takes a deep, contented sigh and purrs almost like a cat.

## SPORTY SKY

On a trip to the Russian River with friends when she was just a few months old, Sky jumped right in after her Kong Water Wubba, eagerly bringing it back, ready to go again. She wasn't too graceful at first, but during our many trips to Crissy Field she morphed into a surfer girl, riding the waves, toy grasped firmly between her teeth.

One day Sky was playing with a herd of Labs when one of the Lab parents decided to throw a log as far as he could. All of the Labs sat on the shore and watched as Sky did a big belly flop into the bay and swam like mad to the log; she wrestled it to shore and dropped it at the man's feet. "What's wrong with this picture?" he asked with a mix of shock and surprise. The Lab parents and I looked first at the six very dry "retrievers" lying on the sand and then at the dripping wet, shivering pit bull puppy, and we all laughed.

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## ALICE

Alice is a beautiful young Blue Pit bull mix. Her ears are hound like, extra big and soft and oh so flappy when she runs. Alice is fostered in a home with another dog with frequent dog guests, AND she lives with

a cat. At home she is very calm and shares her bed and toys with anyone. As a young dog, Alice still has a lot of learning a head of her. She currently is taking a basic training class and has great food motivation. Alice sleeps in a crate at night and goes on big off leash romps to all kinds of parks with an assortment of dogs: big and small.



## OPIE

Opie's perfect home is one that will smother him with love, hugs and kisses. He loves going to the beach, rolling in the grass at the park and receiving belly

rubs. Opie is fine with dogs of all sizes. He is well behaved on walks and greets people politely. He knows "sit" and "shake" and he will "spin" for treats! Opie is totally house-trained; he has the softest white fur, is about 5 1/2 years old and weighs 14 pounds, but he could stand to lose a few pounds, regular exercise is a must!



## BRUCE

Bruce is a multi-colored mastiff mix puppy. Due to his young age, he will need to keep learning to become the confident, large dog that he is destined to be. At times, he is fearful of loud noises but his

foster parents are doing an awesome job of showing him those things aren't so scary. He is a loyal, sweet goofball. Being a puppy he will definitely need an owner with dog experience and a willingness to continue his training via classes. Bruce is neutered, housetrained, up to date with shots, and good with other dogs. Are you ready to bring Bruce into your life?



## POLLY

Meet friendly and easygoing Polly pants! This house-trained, 16 pound Dachshund Chihuahua mix (Chi-weenie!) is approximately 1 to 2 years old. Polly is friendly with adults and children as well as other dogs. She's a clever girl who has taken quickly to training. She has super soft fur and loves to

cuddle. Polly sleeps quietly crated throughout the night and is comfortable being alone up to four hours during the day. She has a clean bill of health and was spayed, microchipped, and fully vaccinated in January. She's such a winning dog that Polly's foster mom is tempted daily to trade in her two resident pooches for this great girl! She's the total package!



## JAMIE

Little Jaime has a darling personality. He's about 7 months but acts like a mature fellow in the house. He sleeps quietly in his crate all night and enjoys going for walks and cuddling during

the day. He may bark a few times on his walks but we believe it's because he is seeing most things for the first time as he soon stops after investigating. Jaime's foster parents describe him as a mild mannered, playful, and well-behaved companion. He gets along great with the resident dog and he seems to be fond of everyone he meets. Jaime's ideal home will give him the proper exercise, basic training and love that he truly deserves.



## TUCKER

Here's Tucker, a 60-pound chocolate Labrador mix. This 6-year-old has the adorable "one ear up and one down" look. He is the ultimate cuddle bug. He loves to play, especially tug of war with his rope. He knows basic commands and is housebroken.

Tucker remembers everyone he has ever met and always manages to sneak in a lick. He is fine being left home alone but eagerly awaits your return and will greet you with love. He will need a good walk each day. Tucker would thrive in an only dog household.

**Check the Grateful Dogs Rescue website for 2014 upcoming Adoption Events Calendar**



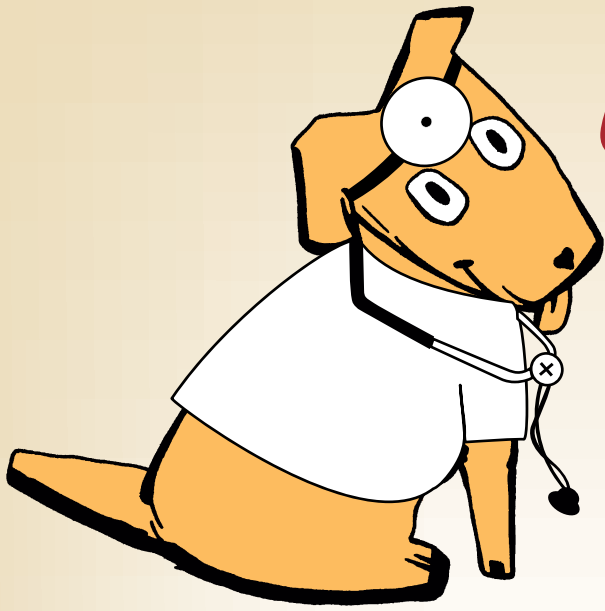
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## A brief look at holistic veterinary medicine

### Q&A with Dr. Karen Rettig of Alternatives For Animals



**Dr. Karen Rettig of Alternatives for Animals (and friend)**

**What are some of the differences between a holistic vet and conventional veterinarian?**

Holistic veterinarians look at the body as a whole and not multiple, separately functioning organ systems. They look at energy flows within the body and their therapy tends to involve balance and harmony within and between the organ systems. Holistic veterinary therapy also attempts to use natural modalities and substances, such as herbs and energetic medicine, to up regulate the animal's immune system and improve its own ability to heal.

**What are some reasons someone would bring their pet to a holistic veterinarian?**

Many people are seeking holistic care for themselves and therefore wish to seek it for their pets. However, I see many patients because the options provided in Western medicine for the treatment of their pets are either not working or the drugs that are prescribed have too many side effects.

**Please describe some of the holistic services available from a holistic vet.**

Holistic medicine encompasses a wide variety of modalities depending on the experience and training of the veterinarian offering them. Some of the more common modalities include acupuncture, chiropractic, Western and Chinese herbal medicine, homeopathy, biofeedback, flower remedies, essential oils, applied kinesiology, reiki, massage, cranio sacral, tuning forks and many other forms of energy work.

**What drew you to holistic medicine?**

I grew up in Australia and competed 3-day event horses. Our horses were always adjusted and acupunctured before competition, so I was aware of how it improved the performance of my own animals. When I graduated from vet school and moved to the United States, I quickly became disillusioned with the side effects of many of the drugs I was prescribing. I also felt that the reason I had become a vet was to heal, and, for me, the drug route was not curing my patients but merely placing a Band-Aid over

their problems. A year after graduating vet school, I completed the IVAS acupuncture course and it changed my life and the medicine I performed. I have continued on the holistic medicine route ever since.

**What symptoms would prompt you to suggest pet acupuncture?**

I believe nearly all conditions can benefit from acupuncture. The main cases we see at our practice referred for acupuncture are allergies, arthritis, cancer, chronic diseases such as renal and thyroid disease, behavioral problems, neurological issues such as seizures, vestibular disease and paralysis.

**Briefly explain the process of pet acupuncture.**

The consultation starts with an extensive questionnaire to establish where the energetic imbalances lay within the body. Based on the Chinese diagnosis, needles are placed into the acupuncture points to effect healing. The process is virtually painless and very relaxing. Most patients fall asleep while their needles are in. The relaxation lasts for the rest of the day and sometimes for days later.

Depending on the condition being treated, the patients either immediately show improvement in symptoms or sometimes it takes two to three treatments, depending on the cause of the illness and the duration prior to seeking acupuncture. Almost all of my patients drag their owners in for their acupuncture treatments.

**Is there anything else about holistic medicine you would like our readers to know?**

Our pet's bodies have an innate ability to heal given the right nutrition and energetic balance within their body. There is a place for conventional medicine in the more acute situations and a place for holistic medicine in chronic illness, non-life-threatening acute illnesses and as a preventative for long-term disease. To find a local holistic veterinarian, go to [www.ahvma.org](http://www.ahvma.org).

**You can call 925-283-6160 for more information on Alternatives for Animals and Dr. Rettig.**